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From whaling days to cannery row : a survey of some aspects of the fishing industry at Monterey and vicinity from 1854 to 1920

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FROM WHALING DAYS

TO

CANNERY ROW

A Survey of Some Aspects
of the
Fishing Industry at Monterey and Vicinity
from 1854 to 1920

By

John Markley Dennis

Stockton

1945

A Thesis

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of the
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APPROVED

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Chairman of the Thesis Committee

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CHAPTER I

WHALES, WHALERS AND WHALING

In the days before there was a Monterey, there were whales in Monterey Bay. We know this because Vizcaino, who dropped anchor in the bay in 1602, kept a diary. And from this diary, Vizcaino's historian, one Venegas who wrote: A History of California in 1758, makes the statement that whales and sea lions swam about in the bay.¹

Apparently, the whales kept on swimming in Monterey Bay for about one hundred and fifty years without being molested. Shortly after that, the whales and Monterey fishermen engaged in a long struggle which took place, with periodic cessation, over a span of, roughly, seventy-five years.

THE WHALE

The varieties of whales frequenting Monterey Bay over the seventy-five year period comprised almost all the whale family. The old Monterey Californian, California's first newspaper² (as quoted in Goode's Fishing Industries) says:

¹ Edwin C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bulletin No. 6, Oct. 7, 1922, p. 6.

² Mrs. Hellum, Head Librarian, Monterey Public Library, Interview Aug. 8, 1945.

"Formerly these marine monsters were so numerous in Monterey Bay that whalers could fill up lying at anchor."¹ This "monster" referred to is the gray whale, which, before its virtual extermination, was "rather local, being confined to the North Pacific."² Captain Scammon, whose book on marine mammals of the Northwest, written about 1874, found that the gray whale resorted to southern California to breed in lagoons.³

The whaling season for the California gray whale ran from about December first to mid-April.⁴ The first half of the season is known as the "going down season" in whaling parlance; it refers to the fact that the whale leaves its arctic haunts and goes down the coast for the purpose of bearing young.⁵ Interest was centered in the female of the species, for it was she who was most easily secured and returned the richest yield in oil, some forty barrels as compared to twenty-five barrels given by the male.⁶ The California gray male stayed in the open sea while the female bore her young in a bay or lagoon; Scammon notes:

¹ E. C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, October 1922, p. 11.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, p. 46.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

"It is rare that the dam will forsake her young one when molested.¹ This, of course, meant the death of the calf, born or unborn.

Lagoon whaling became unprofitable after a short time because of the shortage of whales.² As a consequence, whalers waited for the "coming up" season, the last half of the season during which the whales made their northward return. The whalers often struck the calf in order to get the "cow" or dam.³

Other whales found, as was the California gray, in the waters about the Monterey peninsula, were: the humpback, finback, sulphur-bottom, sei, bottle-nosed grampus, sperm and right whale.⁴

As to size, the California gray was small, averaging but forty-two feet in length and thirty feet in circumference, as compared to the huge and cosmopolitan sulphur-bottom which measured one hundred feet from tip to tip. The only right whale taken in Monterey was seventy feet in length and fifty feet in circumference.⁵

¹ Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, p. 45.

² E.C. Starks, History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, October 1922, p. 11.

³ A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, p.45.

⁴ E.C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, October 1922, p. 15.

⁵ A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, p.46.

WHALERS

The Monterey Whaling Company was organized in 1854 by Captain J. P. Davenport, an experienced whaler. Davenport collected a crew of twelve men only three or four of whom were whalers. This organization possessed two boats equipped with harpoons and bomb-lances. The bomb-lances proved defective and worthless, and before the first season was completed, the price of whale oil fell to twenty-five cents per gallon. The company disbanded before the next season.¹

In 1855, a company of Portuguese known as the "Old Company" commenced operations. The Old Company consisted of seventeen men and two boats. They used no guns at all, yet managed to take about 800 barrels of oil annually over a period of three years.² During their first season of operation they took eighteen whales and the men made \$438.00 each.³ From 1854-'58 the "Old Company" got hump-back whales.⁴

In the fall of 1858, Captain Davenport, hearing that California gray whales abounded in the bay of Monterey, again started operations with a new crew and two boats

¹ A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1874, p. 44.

² Ibid.

³ E.C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, Oct. 1922, p. 18.

⁴ Ibid.

equipped with bomb and harpoon guns.¹

Two companies now whaled in the bay and got 600-1000 barrels of whale oil per company annually for several years. Then Davenport again withdrew, and his company became known as the "New Company" of Portuguese whalers. In the 1862-'63 season, both companies secured 1700 barrels of oil, a record year.²

In 1861, the Carmel Whaling Company was organized. At first they whaled in Monterey Bay, but in 1862 moved to Carmel Bay to a site which is now part of Point Lobos State Park.³

Carmel Bay Station, as it was called, was described by Captain Scammon as a small settlement of whitewashed cabins where the whalers, nearly all Portuguese, and their families lived. They had both flower and vegetable gardens and kept livestock. Under a rocky bluff lay the station itself, built on a quay of stone which supported its cutting and trying establishment. The storehouse, in which were kept boats and equipment, was a small shed covered with cypress boughs. A lookout house was located on the hill above the station.⁴

¹ A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, p.44.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ E.C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, Oct. 1922, pp. 22-24.

The Point Sur Whaling Station was also operated by the Carmel Bay Station from 1877-'79. The Carmel Bay Station was abandoned about 1884.¹

Changes were made in the whaling scene at Monterey. Both the Old and New Companies of Portuguese whalers were consolidated under Captain Pray and became one company of twenty-three men in 1873.²

The United States Fish Commission report for the year 1888 states that the Monterey Whaling Station was abandoned in 1881.³ The station was revived again in 1895 by Captain H. Schaufele who operated there with a company for two or three years.⁴

In 1899 this interesting item regarding the "abandoned" Carmel Bay Station appears:

The Japanese Whaling Company at Carmel has commenced operations for the season. They employ ten white whalers and seven Japanese whalers. The whales are now going south and will be in these waters until the middle of January, and some big catches may be looked for.⁵

The United States Fish Commission report of 1901 mentions this fact: "The whale fishery was followed by

¹ E. C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, Oct. 1922, pp. 22-24.

² Ibid. p. 18.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Monterey New Era, Nov. 8, 1899.

eight Portuguese and eight Japanese who use whale boats to pursue passing whales, which, on being killed are towed to shore stations."¹

With the turn of the century, then, Monterey ceased to be a whaler's port. But whaling on Monterey Bay did not cease; rather, it underwent a period of cessation so common in Monterey's fishing industry.

Captain Davenport and the whalers left Monterey two landmarks. On Decatur Street, just a block from the water front, the Monterey Whaling Station still stands, and the whalebone sidewalk in front of it is still intact. Next door to the whaling station stands the first brick house in California which was Captain Davenport's residence. He kept his supplies in the Jenny Lind Theatre.² And there are those who say that the cement foundations of the trying kettles of the whalery may still be found, just north of the site of the old Booth Cannery....

WHALING

The earliest method of whaling used at Monterey was that known as "old shore whaling". The old shore whalers ventured forth at dawn. Two boats were used, six men to a

¹ E. C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, Oct. 1922, p. 19.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

boat. They rowed to the "whaling ground" near Point Pinos, and having reached their destination, "lay on their oars" to scan for a spout. When the whale spout was sighted, out rang the cry: "There she blows!" The whalers then rowed toward the whale, and as they neared it, "peaked their oars" and used paddles in order not to frighten the monster. Shooting distance was forty yards, and having attained it, the harpooner shot his missile from the harpoon gun into the visible portion of the whale. The whale dove and swam toward open sea. The harpoon line was made fast around the "loggerhead" and the whaleboat and whalers were taken for a lightning fast tour of Monterey Bay. When the whale wearied and came up to breathe, the boat was paddled in close and the bomb lance fired. If it hit a vital part, the whale died instantly. More often than not, however, it took two or three bombs.

When dead, and if afloat, the whale was towed to the try works where the blubber was removed. This operation was known as flensing. The blubber was removed in a huge blanket spiral, all in one piece; then it was minced and boiled or "tried out". The bone was salvaged and sold along with the oil; but the carcass was considered valueless and discarded.¹

In case the whale sank, a buoy was attached to the

¹ E. C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, Oct. 1922, p. 14.

harpoon line and the whale was abandoned. In from three to nine days, gases originating in the whale's body caused it to rise. It was then towed in and "tried out".¹ However, Captain Scammon estimated that one-fifth of whales killed were lost by sinking.²

Michael Noon, a famous Monterey whaler still alive in the 1920's, stated that whaling boats always traveled in pairs for safety; men refused to go out unless accompanied. Whalers were often accompanied by a signalman who stayed ashore and dipped his flag if he located a whale before the boatmen did.³

The life of a whaler is very exciting and dangerous, as the boat is sometimes capsized or swamped, and the men have to swim for their lives. Yet such is the force of habit that they seem to feel no more fear when in pursuit of a whale than if they were upon dry land.⁴

The life of the whale was exciting and dangerous too. And the whalers, even though their methods were sometimes crude and faulty, managed to deplete the supply of whales to such an extent that even during the 1870's and 1880's warnings foretelling the inevitable end were written.

¹ A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, p.48.

² E. C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, Oct. 1922, p. 10.

³ Ibid., p. 9.

⁴ A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, p. 48.

The whale fishery, which for the last twenty-five years has constituted one of the most important of our local industries is likely soon to become a thing of the past.¹

As a matter of fact, by the first half of the decade 1880-1890 both the Monterey Whaling Company and the Carmel Bay Company had ceased operations.²

At various times, whaling has ceased because it became unprofitable. Either whales became too scarce to pay for whaling methods, or the price of oil and bone reached too low a level to make operations worthwhile. "Usually the two go together, for the price of oil has never gone so low that whaling couldn't profit if there were enough whales."³ When whaling has been resumed, it was because new methods of whaling have so improved that profits might be made.⁴ "Were it not for the utility of Greener's gun", said Captain Scammon in writing of shore whaling in 1874, "the coast fisheries would be abandoned; whales ... have become ... wild and difficult to approach."⁵

But as the old method of throwing a harpoon and hand lancing the whale had become obsolete, so did Greener's gun

¹ A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, p. 48.

² Cf., p. 4.

³ E. C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, Oct. 1922, p. 7.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

and the other operations connected with old shore whaling. Captain Scammon summed up twenty-two years of California shore whaling by estimating that 4000 whales were taken, which averaged about 181 whales annually. Few animals visited the coast at the time of writing, 1871, and those that did were difficult to approach.¹

Therefore, whaling could become profitable after the turn of the century only under the most destructive methods.² It remained for science and industry to invent an almost faultless harpoon, a steam whaler, and a method of processing which utilized the entire carcass. This was done, and on Monterey Bay. But it is another chapter and comes later in the story.

¹ E. C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bull. #6, Oct. 1922, p. 12.

² Ibid.

CHAPTER II

FISH, SHELLFISH AND ORIENTALS

As whaling and Portuguese whalers began the downward spiral, another small but industrious group was on the rise. This was the Chinese contingent who had found the fish business satisfying to gullet and pocketbook alike.

Chinese were on the shores of Monterey Bay gathering, drying, and shipping abalone to China as early as 1864.¹ And, as national groups will, the Chinese gathered in groups of companies and formed little colonies on the Monterey Peninsula. The largest of these colonies was Old Chinatown near Monterey.

Chinatown is distant from Monterey about one mile and is situated on one of the numerous small bays that line the Bay of Monterey. It is admirably selected for the business carried on by its enterprising citizens -- fish curing and abalone (sic) shell shipping. Its inhabitants are frugal and well behaved and industrious. Little or no crime occurs among them...²

In the actual Chinatown, there were some thirty-nine Chinese representing five "companies": Man Lee, Sun Sing Lee, Yek Lee, Yee Lee, and Man Sing.³ Three other

¹ California Fish and Game Bulletin #49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 108.

² A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, pp. 49-50.

³ Ibid.

"companies" dwelt on Carmel, El Pescadero, and Portuguese Bay; their membership was twenty-eight.¹ And there were twenty-eight Chinese living outside the colonies who had employment in town. The year: 1875.²

The Chinese at Monterey fished for rockfish, cod, halibut, flounder, red and blue fish, yellow tail, mackerel, sardines, and shell fish. The greater part of these were split open, salted, and dried in the sun for export to San Francisco, from which they "find their way to mines in the state and abroad."³ It was estimated that one hundred tons of dried fish were exported annually by the Chinese at Monterey.⁴

From the pictures extant of Old Chinatown at Monterey, it would appear a strange assortment of shacks with a street running between them. Some, if not most, of the houses had fish drying racks on their roofs. The Chinese owned some thirty boats, most of which they built; "they are sailed in Chinese fashion".⁵

The El Pescadero Chinese Village is worthy of note if only for its leading citizen of that early period, one

¹ A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, pp. 49-50.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

Wo Hop. He sold abalone shells, which, au naturel, brought \$20.00 per ton.¹ By 1879, it was found by white men, who had interested themselves in the abalone, that the shells were worth twice the value of the meats.²

Wo Hop had a shop complete with grinders and buffers and polished his own shells, many of which he shipped to Los Angeles and San Francisco. He fished as well for abalones, sea weed, and sea urchins which he shipped away. His two daughters ran the shell stands which were located on present day Pebble Beach property. It was said that Wo Hop belonged to a smuggling ring that operated from Mexican waters, but nobody did anything about it. He didn't believe in banks, either, and deposited his money with a Monterey merchant who failed in business and disposed of a considerable portion of Wo Hop's savings.³

Wo Hop's friends, Ah Merry and Wu Chong, were less fortunate than Wo Hop. They were poor, and Ah Merry was later found to have leprosy; both he and Wu Chong were sent to Molakai leper colony.⁴

The El Pescadero village consisted of eleven bamboo

¹ A Handbook of Monterey and Vicinity, Monterey, 1875, pp. 49-50.

² California Fish and Game Bulletin #49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 108.

³ Carmel Pine Cone, The Ways of Wo Hop, by J. Hitchcock, August 10, 1945, p. 5.

⁴ Ibid.

shacks. The Chinese were actually squatters, since the Pacific Improvement Company (later Del Monte properties) owned all the land about them. The Chinese paid no rent and were supplied with water for a dollar a month by the Pacific Improvement Co. Wo Hop's house was the only one with running water, the rest being served by a stand pipe in the center of the settlement.¹

The Chinese at El Pescadero were ambitious fishermen. They arose at three and went to the fishing grounds without breakfast, returning about ten-thirty or eleven, in time to get their catch to Monterey for the noon train to San Francisco markets. They fished at El Pescadero from September to May. When the salmon and squid began to run in Monterey Bay, they moved to Monterey's Old Chinatown. At this time they also caught and salted sardines for bait for the winter months' fishing.²

Squid fishing as practiced by the Chinese in Monterey Bay was a colorful affair. They set forth at night in skiffs with lateen sails. The boats were small, and each one was equipped with a "fire basket" suspended by a long metal arm from the side of the boat. In these "fire baskets", pine wood was burned. The squid, attracted by the glow, would rise to the surface and were thereby snared

¹ Carmel Pine Cone, The Ways of Wo Hop, by J. Hitchcock, August 10, 1945, p. 5.

² Ibid.

with small purse-seine nets. Twenty or thirty such boats made a dazzling show at night.¹

Like the majority of the other fish, the squid were dried by the Chinese. This squid drying operation was confined to Monterey; Chinese started drying squid here in 1888. They were shipped to China, and "this export depended mainly on the stability of silver, the medium of exchange in China."²

Sun drying was preferred; the Chinese trade liked oiliness, flavor, and keeping qualities produced by this method. Dried squid was, in this early period, shipped in sacks.³

April, May and June were the squid drying months in Monterey. The Chinese used trays or racks at first, but later turned to open field drying as well. "You know that weed that pops under your feet?" asked Miss Smith; "well the Chinese laid their squid on that because those little pop-sacks kept the squid up off the ground."⁴ This practice of field drying possibly began near the turn of the century. What happened to squid drying and Old Chinatown is a subject for later chapters. The next consideration

¹ Nellie K. Smith, Interview, August 3, 1945.

² California Fish and Game Bulletin #49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 116.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Nellie K. Smith, Interview, August 3, 1945.

is the salmon.

Trolling for salmon began in Monterey Bay in the early 1880's, but did not become commercially important until the late 1890's.¹ The first mild curing was done in California in 1898; in Monterey, about 1901.²

The salmon caught in Monterey were and are of two varieties: king salmon and silver salmon. Occasionally, humpback salmon were taken but this variety was rather rare.

Both Chinese and Japanese fished for salmon, the latter constituting a definite majority. The Japanese were liberally scattered through Monterey near Figueroa and Washington Streets. A few Japanese lived in a barn in New Monterey on the site of the present day San Xavier warehouse.³ The boats first used by the salmon fishermen for trolling were skiffs with small, white "leg o' mutton" sails.⁴ Salmon trolling was given its impetus by the mild-curing process; but prior to that time salmon was salted and dried or sold fresh to the markets.⁵

¹ California Fish and Game Bulletin, #49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 50.

² Ibid., p. 52.

³ K. Hovden, Interview, August 17, 1945.

⁴ California Fish and Game Bulletin #49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 50.

⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

The Japanese salmon trollers were aggressive and soon dominated that type of fishing before and after the turn of the century. That left the Chinese fishing for the once-despised squid. And characteristically, the Japanese moved into the other field which the Chinese had pioneered: abalone fishing.

In 1900, Monterey passed an ordinance making anything but deep-water abalone fishing unlawful if the abalones were to be gathered for commercial use. Apparently, they were alarmed at the depletion in the bay's tidal zone.¹

No other racial group in Monterey but the Japanese has been successful at deep water diving; they developed that technique, and became leaders in the field, and remained so for many years after 1900.

¹ California Fish and Game Bulletin #49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 51.

CHAPTER III

ARRIVALS, DEPARTURES AND CONFLICTS

In chapters one and two there has been an attempt to show some of the formative elements in Monterey's fishing industry: the major types of fishing and the racial groups involved. This amounts to a gathering of forces on the scene. During the period from 1900 to 1920, these types of fishing and fishermen rise, decline, are added unto, subtracted from, and generally interwoven until one type of fishing and one racial group dominate the entire scene.

It should be explained beforehand that at this time in Monterey harbor, that little pocket of Monterey Bay, there was a small wharf built of piling and planks. This structure was known as the Pacific Coast Steamship Wharf because that company's vessels docked there; the wharf was leased from the City of Monterey for a number of years.¹ To the northeast of the steamship wharf was the oil and lumber wharf. There was no breakwater until 1932, but the struggle for it was one of the bitterest and most pathetic chapters in Monterey history. The steamship wharf, although it was rather short as wharves go, was ample in width to house several fresh fish establishments.

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, June 20, 1913.

Running southward around the contour of Monterey harbor were the tracks of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which, indeed are still there, as is the steamship wharf, now called fishermen's wharf.

In 1900, fishermen found "salmon and other fish ... plentiful in the bay, and large quantities ... shipped daily to San Francisco."¹ Shipping of fresh fish in 1900, and for about two decades after, was done by rail. That noonday train that Wo Hop met in Monterey was the Southern Pacific "Fish Express" which made a daily trip from Monterey to San Francisco. The types of fish shipped varied, to be sure, with the season and daily catch, but a sample shipment at this time would have included: tuna, salmon, rockfish, flatfish, sea bass, halibut, mackerel and abalone.²

The first indication that Monterey was slated for something new and different came in 1900 with the appearance of:

Mr. H. R. Robbins of San Francisco, who is making arrangements for establishing on the shore of the Bay, south of King's Beach, fish preserving and canning works, and facilities for the manufacture of oils and fertilizers... All kinds of fish that are unsuitable for the market, the heads, tails, and offal of edible fish, whole carcasses and sharks will be utilized. The process of manufacture is of such a nature that no obnoxious odor will emanate from the works -- an important consideration.³

¹ Monterey New Era, Aug. 1, 1900.

² Ibid., Aug. 29, 1900.

³ Ibid., April 18, 1900.

The city fathers were solidly behind Mr. Robbins, and he was "heartily welcome(d) to Monterey". But apparently Mr. Robbins needed to secure government permission for his waterfront site.¹ As this was not forthcoming, Mr. Robbins and his plans disappeared for a year and a half.²

In the meantime, another part of Monterey Peninsula had gotten the cannery idea:

The Abalone Canning Company has lately erected a canning plant at the head of a picturesque little cove seven miles south of Monterey... The divers are all Japanese, who earn good wages as there is no close (sic) season on abalones and the cannery operates all the year round.³

The Japanese used regular deep sea diving equipment. The diver carried a sack into which he dropped the abalones which were pried from the rocks with an iron bar. In the boat above him were his assistants who supplied him with air from a hand pump and pulled up the full sacks of abalones by a line attached to the sack. When the boat was loaded, it returned to the cove, and the catch was put in wire baskets which were slung from a wire rope stretched across the cove to the cannery. The baskets were allowed to trail in the water to keep the catch fresh. When ready for use, the catch was hoisted in its baskets into

¹ Monterey New Era, April 18, 1900.

² Ibid., Sept. 25, 1901.

³ Ibid., Oct. 3, 1900.

the cannery by a steam derrick.¹

The Abalone Canning Company, which soon acquired the name: Point Lobos Abalone Cannery due to its location, was managed by J. W. Gayetty, employed nineteen men, and averaged a daily output of 1500 cans, most of which were shipped to San Francisco by boat. The government also became interested and asked for a shipment of eight hundred cases and an order of one hundred cases was shipped to the Fiji Islands.²

In 1901, a gentleman returned to Monterey after a five year absence. His name: J. P. Haller; his business: representative for the Sacramento River Packers Association; his mission: to interest local fishermen in catching salmon to be brined and barreled for shipment to the east and Europe.³

Mr. Haller had originally come to Monterey in 1896 and established a salmon cannery for the Sacramento River Packers Association. The fishermen had agreed to sell their salmon to Mr. Haller for four cents per pound. San Francisco buyers, learning of this, raised their bid to six cents per pound. The fishermen became confused, and, failing to realize that the San Francisco price was a "freeze

¹ Monterey New Era, October 3, 1900.

² Ibid., October 31, 1900.

³ Ibid., June 5, 1901.

out" bid, sold to those buyers. Mr. Haller's cannery went out of business in a month's time; the fish price returned to four cents per pound in San Francisco. The fishermen had lost a good local market since the prevailing price in Monterey had ranged between one and a half cents and three cents per pound, and the city of Monterey felt the loss of a promising business.¹

Mr. Haller promised, in his second attempt at salmon packing, that if all the fishermen signed a contract promising their entire seasonal catch at four cents per pound to the Sacramento River Packers Association (which will be referred to hereafter as S.R.P.A.) he would start operations in ten days.²

The press was very favorable toward Mr. Haller's plan:

... this undertaking... would put a great deal of money into circulation. During the month the cannery ran in 1896, 800 cases of salmon were put up, about twenty men and boys were employed, and about \$8000 expended in installing the plant, wages, etc.³

The fishermen signed, and Mr. Haller kept his word. The plant, which was a packing plant, not a cannery, opened in a week's time, although the building was incomplete when the fish arrived -- seven tons of salmon! One

¹ Monterey New Era, June 5, 1901.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., June 12, 1901.

hundred boats, manned by Orientals principally, were fishing.¹

In 1901, the packing operation for salmon was quite simple. The fish were brought to the packing house, weighed, and given to the cutters who expertly removed the head, tail, and entrails, and split the fish in half, removing the backbone. The two halves were dropped in brine and ice, and subsequently packed in ice and sweet pickle and shipped by train to San Francisco. There, the salmon was held in cold storage for a time, then smoked, repacked, and the bulk of it sent to New York and Europe.²

But Mr. Haller brought more than a business to Monterey. He brought with him the man whose vision, energy, and business acumen changed the direction of the entire Monterey fishing industry.

That man's name was F. E. Booth; he was secretary of S.R.P.A. in 1901, and came with Haller "to get things running smoothly". While in Monterey Mr. Booth made a statement to the press:

You'll find us pretty liberal people. So far as possible we'll buy what supplies we need and can obtain right here in Monterey. The ice used this afternoon was purchased from a local dealer and this policy will be pursued as far as possible.³

¹ Monterey New Era, June 12, 1901.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

The packing house did a fine business its first season, and paid out \$9000 for fish alone.¹

Mr. H. R. Robbins returned late in 1901, secured his franchise of waterfront property, and promptly erected buildings for "the smoking, canning and drying of edible fish". His fertilizing plant was to be established at Point Lobos in the old whalery buildings. Mr. Robbins planned to employ about fifty workers in the two plants.²

To Mr. Robbins must go the credit for being first in canning sardines. He put them up in spices, and put out a specialty pack of smoked herring as well.³

Amidst the experimentation and probable prosperity of Robbins and Booth, the abalone cannery at Point Lobos failed.⁴ In its stead, something new was started at Point Lobos -- a new abalone cannery owned by A. M. Allen.⁵

Two gentlemen of New Monterey, which lies between Monterey and Pacific Grove, were encouraged by the start which Booth and Robbins had made in the packing and canning business respectively. Harry Malpas was formerly affiliated with the Point Lobos Abalone Cannery: his associate, O. Noda, was a Japanese contractor. These two

¹ Monterey New Era, May 21, 1902.

² Ibid., Sept. 25, 1902.

³ Ibid., Feb. 19, 1902.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

men erected a plant 25 by 60 feet in size for the purpose of canning abalone, principally; the abalone was to be brought from Point Lobos by Japanese divers. They planned to employ thirty or forty hands in their plant.¹

There is no available record of their activities, if, indeed there were any. But the plant has great historic value for it was the first cannery built in New Monterey, site of present day Cannery Row.

In its second season of salmon packing, the S.R.P.A. had a competitor named Bernard Lindenberg from San Francisco, who leased quarters on the steamship wharf and opened a packing house for several days. Lindenberg offered five cents per pound for salmon; S.R.P.A. offered four cents per pound.²

But Bernard Lindenberg did practically no business, while S.R.P.A. enjoyed a fine season because they had all the salmon fishermen under contract.³ The S.R.P.A. packing house employed "150 men, Americans, Portuguese, Spaniards, Japanese, Chinese and whatnot, all engaged in the work and all making money."⁴

In the meantime, Mr. F. E. Booth was experimenting in

¹ Monterey New Era Feb. 19, 1902.

² Ibid., May 21, 1902.

³ Ibid., May 28, 1902.

⁴ Ibid.

the company's buildings at the wharf. Operating a miniature cannery, Mr. Booth put up a sample pack of ten cases of sardines.¹ The sardines were put up in three styles: soured (spiced), with tomato sauce and in mustard; they were pronounced "delicious".²

Because of Mr. Booth's success, there was talk of putting up a sardine cannery in Monterey. But machinery of a larger nature was needed and, more than that, a suitable building, for the salmon packing house was too small.

Mr. Robbins supplied the answer to Mr. Booth's housing problem. At the foot of Alvarado Street, Monterey's main thoroughfare, Mr. Robbins erected The Cannery Boat House with a pavilion overhanging King's Beach, a view of the bay, glass bottom boats and all the trimmings.³

With the beginning of the third salmon season for S.R.P.A., Mr. Booth purchased The Cannery Boat House from Mr. Robbins. The waterfront site on which it was located was leased from Mrs. M. M. Cooper until 1907, yearly rental amounting to \$10.00.⁴

Mr. Booth then sent for Caleb Windsor who had charge of the canning department for S.R.P.A. Windsor and his

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Oct. 26, 1909.

² Monterey New Era, June 18, 1902.

³ Ibid., Aug. 13, 1902.

⁴ Ibid., May 6, 1903.

crew doubled the size of the Cannery Boat House, placing the addition on pilings over the water and strengthening the entire structure for the installation of machinery.¹ A complete canning plant was installed at a cost of \$10,000.²

The third salmon season was poor for a number of reasons, and the packing house closed down after two months.³

The sardine cannery, on the other hand, got off to a good start. Twenty-five to forty hands were employed to put up sardines "in a preparation of spices and vinegar... known as soured sardines".⁴ Actually, the sardines were not labeled sardines, but were popularly known as "soured mackerel".⁵ All operations were done by hand, and the tops of the cans were sealed with solder.⁶

Mr. Booth stated that he planned to enlarge his plant the next year; that his market for sardines was in the state, although his packed salmon market was in Germany; that sardines next season would be canned in oil and mustard sauce.⁷ The sardine pack for 1903 was about 25,000

¹ Monterey New Era, May 20, 1903.

² Ibid., Aug. 26, 1903.

³ Ibid., July 22, 1903.

⁴ Ibid., Aug. 26, 1903.

⁵ K. Hovden, Interview, May 3, 1945.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Monterey New Era, Aug. 26, 1903.

cases; \$21,000 was paid out for labor in the cannery and about the same amount paid to salmon fishermen for their catch.¹

Meanwhile, a development seriously affecting the fishermen was taking place. Late in 1901, the Native Sons of the Golden West had secured from the government a lease on the building and reservation of the old Custom House of Monterey. They gave the fishermen, who used the grounds or reservation, formal notice to vacate the grounds and remove the buildings in which the fishermen stowed their gear. There were some twenty little shacks on the property?²

The fishermen were belligerent, claiming the whole idea was a plot by Mr. Robbins who wanted a roadway to his fish smoking and packing house. Philanthropic Mr. Robbins protested that he had no need of a roadway, and would attempt to find the fishermen a new location.³

The press was sympathetic to the fishermen:

It is not desirable that the fishermen should suffer... The fishing industry is an important one to the town, and the men engaged in it are mostly poor. It therefore becomes the duty of the citizens to see that provision is made for them.⁴

¹ Monterey New Era, Oct. 23, 1901.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., Oct. 30, 1901.

Like the battle over the wharf and the breakwater, this Custom House property issue was carried on for a number of years and provided the press with a good deal of copy, the fishermen and N S G W with headaches.

It will be remembered that the chief occupation of the Chinese colony near Pacific Grove was the drying of squid. Furthermore, the odor given off by drying squid is most unpleasant. When the breezes blew off China Point, they wafted nauseous aroma into Monterey. A "number of citizens" complained to Mayor Johnson of Monterey that the smell was an "unbearable nuisance". The mayor called on Mr. Eardley of Pacific Improvement Co. at Pacific Grove and the two dignitaries made a hurried investigation of the squid drying fields. Mr. Eardley agreed that the drying of squid should be stopped immediately. A few hours thereafter, a rain came up, and the odor was sickening. The squid which were drying at the time were spoiled, and the Chinese dumped the whole batch into the sea. An order forbidding the further drying of any squid was immediately issued by Mr. Eardley. The Chinese then dried what squid they had on hand, and the nuisance was abated.¹

Mr. Eardley, Superintendent of Pacific Improvement Company which at that time owned Pacific Grove,² was

¹ Monterey New Era, May 14, 1902.

² Ibid.

questioned as to the future of the squid industry in that town. He stated that neither the Pacific Improvement Company nor the people of Pacific Grove had any special interest in keeping the squid fisheries, and since squid drying had been stopped, Chinatown, having practically no other business would soon cease to exist. Both Monterey and the Pacific Improvement Company would be gainers, since the abolition of Chinatown would make available waterfront sites for the "building... of... villas".¹

It was during the third salmon season under S.R.P.A. management that the first clash developed between Oriental and Occidental fishermen. To begin with, the season ran backwards -- the big salmon appeared first.² Members of the Monterey Fishermen's Union, (this is the first mention of a union of fishermen) suddenly refused to sell any more salmon to the S.R.P.A. packing house because S.R.P.A. was buying from the Japanese. Instead, they shipped their catches to A. Paladini of San Francisco who was paying four and a half cents per pound for salmon as compared to the packing house price of four cents per pound for large salmon, three cents for small.³

The season, as noted earlier, was considerably

¹ Monterey New Era, May 14, 1902.

² Ibid., July 1, 1903.

³ Ibid.

shortened, and the packing house closed down after a two months run. Consequently, before the opening of the fourth salmon season, the press reminded the fishermen that "the operation of the packing house is a great advantage, for it gives... a market right at the wharf... for salmon..."¹ Before the appearance of S.R.P.A., fishermen were dependent on San Francisco commission men who did not pay fishermen enough, during a period of oversupply, to pay for catching the fish.²

With the opening of the fourth salmon season, salmon were plentiful. The price offered by S.R.P.A. was three cents per pound for salmon over eighteen pounds, two cents per pound for all under that weight.³

But the fishermen had another hook on their lines: both Japanese and white fishermen refused to sell to S.R.P.A. because they considered the price too low. They were disposing of their catch in San Francisco where they received two and a half cents per pound regardless of size.⁴

The packing house spent two days in mourning while the fishermen talked it over among themselves. In the meantime, Mr. Booth was getting the sardine cannery ready for opera-

¹ Monterey New Era, May 4, 1904.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., May 25, 1904.

⁴ Ibid., June 1, 1904.

tions; that phase of S.R.P.A. business only required one or two gasoline launches which S.R.P.A. could send down from Sacramento.¹

The fishermen knew they were in a poor position. S.R.P.A. could shut down the packing house, and Mr. J. H. Madison, its manager, could go back to Sacramento and wait for the season to open there.

Monterey salmon was "an inconsiderable part of S.R.P.A. business".² That would leave the fishermen at the mercy of San Francisco dealers who deducted pay for: short weight, shrinkage, and spoiled fish. By staying with S.R.P.A. fishermen were reasonably sure of \$12,000 for a season's work.³

Finally, the white fishermen said that they were willing to dispose of salmon at the packing house if the Japanese would do likewise. This represented quite a departure from their policy of the previous season, and caused some speculation as to how the Japanese managed to get the upper hand.⁴

At this time, the Monterey Chamber of Commerce stepped in and asked the disputing parties to meet and reach a compromise. This was done, and Mr. Booth signed seventy-

¹ Monterey New Era, Nov. 4, 1903.

² Ibid., June 1, 1904.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

two Japanese fishermen to sell to S.R.P.A. at the original price of three cents and two cents. Booth explained that S.R.P.A. would lose money, because the fish were too small to sell at a profit.¹

When the sardine cannery opened a few weeks later, everything was running smoothly, and small salmon were canned.²

The fourth salmon season was a long one, and near the end of it, a record day's catch was made -- 3000 salmon! The packing crew worked "all day and all night".³

The sardine cannery was averaging four tons of canned fish a day, and the sardines had just begun to run.⁴ At the S.R.P.A. packing house, experiments were being made in "dry salting sardines"; one or two tons were to be put up that way for trial, and it was expected that a ready market would be found for them in Germany.⁵

The Southern Pacific Railroad, seeing the growth in fish shipment, made a concession to the fishing industry. The railroad allowed fish to be shipped on the evening train from Monterey. As most salmon was caught and packed for shipment in the afternoon, shipment was thereby made

¹ Monterey New Era, June 5, 1904.

² Ibid., June 29, 1904.

³ Ibid., Aug. 10, 1904.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., Aug. 17, 1904.

possible on the day the fish were caught.¹

S.R.P.A. closed its packing house in the fall of 1904 after a very successful season.² S.R.P.A. had made a fine start in Monterey and Mr. Booth had done a remarkable thing for the fishing industry. The fishermen were ready to do a great thing for Mr. Booth and the canning industry.

¹ Monterey New Era, July 17, 1904.

² Ibid., Sept. 15, 1904.

CHAPTER IV
1905 to 1910
EBB AND FLOW

1905

The year 1905 will be long remembered for a great innovation in the fishing industry, the fishermen's gift to the canning business: the lampara net.¹

The story behind the lampara net involves two great men: Pietro Ferrante, "father of Monterey sardine fishing", and F. E. Booth, "father of Monterey's canning industry". In 1905, Ferrante told Booth of the lampara net which was used by fishermen in the Mediterranean area. Booth was interested and backed Ferrante who sent for and secured a lampara net from Tangiers.² Undoubtedly, Booth's reason for obtaining the new net was a financial one. Since 1903, the method by which sardines were caught was costly and inefficient. The net used for catching sardines and squid from 1903 through 1906 was the purse-seine, a large unwieldy, expensive net which required a large crew and a

¹ California Fish and Game, Sardine Number, Vol. 7, No. 4, October 1921, p. 197.

² Ibid.

strange barge-like boat known as the "Sacramento seine".¹ The Japanese also had a purse type net known as the round-haul.² In general use for many types of fishing was the gill net, also used for sardines; its chief disadvantage was its small capacity.³

The lampara net (lampara means lamp or light in Spanish; a slight possibility that the net was so named because the fish caught by it, i.e. sardines and squid, radiate a phosphorescence in the water) was the answer to Mr. Booth's prayer. It became standard equipment after 1906.⁴ Because of its great influence and the subsequent debate over its legality, a description of the lampara net seems to be indicated.

The dimensions of Ferranti's lampara are not to be found. But obviously this net served as a model for later lamparas; net size is determined by many factors such as markets, price, size of vessel, etc.; in turn a net may expand or contract the size of vessels or crews, and alter price levels for fish.

The lampara net is similar to a purse net, but is not

¹ California Fish and Game, Sardine Number, Vol. 7, No. 4, October 1921, p. 197.

² W. L. Scofield, Sardine Fishing Methods at Monterey, California Fish and Game Bulletin #19, 1929, pp.25-26.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

a true purse seine in that it has no separate pursing line.¹ Lampara nets in use during the first decade after 1905 were about 100 fathoms (600 feet) in length, 10-12 fathoms in width; like the true purse, the lampara had cork floats on its top edge, lead weights on the bottom edge to keep it taut -- a big screen around the school of fish.² Roughly, the net may be divided into three sections: the two "wings" of wide mesh, and the center "sack" or bunt of fine mesh.³

In the structure of the net one finds the reason for the great controversy. The wide-meshed wings made handling the net simpler, because these portions of the net could be drawn through the water rapidly; the net was also smaller and lighter than the previously used purse seines and required a smaller boat and crew for operations. The center section of fine mesh formed a distorted "bag" and held the fish securely.⁴

The great debate, as will be seen later, was chiefly concerned with the destructiveness of the center "sack" or fine meshed bunt -- which was claimed by some fishermen

¹ W. L. Scofield, Sardine Fishing Methods at Monterey, California Fish and Game Bulletin #19, 1929, pp.25-26.

² Monterey American, Dec. 26, 1912.

³ W. L. Scofield, Sardine Fishing Methods at Monterey, California Fish and Game Bulletin #19, 1929, p. 27.

⁴ Monterey Daily Cypress, Dec. 26, 1912.

"to imprison thousands of immature fish".¹

The actual operation of the lampara net and resultant protestations which traveled from Monterey to the state legislature are best discussed in relation to the growth of the fishing and canning industries.

As usual, the S.R.P.A. packing house was open for business at the beginning of its fifth salmon season.

S.R.P.A. had experienced a poor season on the Sacramento River and hoped for a big catch at Monterey; S.R.P.A. price for salmon: two cents per pound under seventeen pounds, four cents for all fish over that weight.²

Bernard Lindenberg was back in town and had established a packing house at the "abalone cannery at New Monterey".³ It is quite possible that the abalone cannery at New Monterey was originally the Malpas-Noda New Monterey Fishing and Canning Company.

Both S.R.P.A. and Lindenberg had signed, between them, some 120 Japanese boats for the season. White fishermen were excluded and had to depend on San Francisco markets for sale of their salmon catch.⁴

During this season, S.R.P.A. began to ship fresh

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Dec. 26, 1912.

² Monterey New Era, May 31, 1905.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

salmon, packed only in ice, out of the state. Wells-Fargo Express carried a ton a day from Monterey.¹

The fifth season for salmon was a poor one. Bernard Lindenberg closed his packing house and left Monterey for good. This gave S.R.P.A. a clear field.² Shortly after this, the S.R.P.A. packing house closed for the season. Disbursements for fish and labor were \$15,000; with the usual catch, \$30,000 would have been paid.³

Mr. Booth's pride and joy, the sardine cannery, which had acquired the name: Monterey Packing Company, enjoyed a six month run. During this time, the cannery employed forty to sixty people at \$2.25 per day.⁴ Fish and labor costs amounted to about \$18,000.⁵

Fish offal was apparently tossed in the bay; no further mention is made of Mr. Robbins and his fertilizer plant. There was an assertion made that the "waterfront is scandalous" and the harbor "full of drifting sewage".⁶

Attention was drawn to the condition of the beaches and harbor because Monterey desperately wanted a breakwater

¹ Monterey New Era, June 14, 1905.

² Ibid., July 26, 1905.

³ Ibid., Aug. 16, 1905.

⁴ Ibid., Dec. 13, 1905.

⁵ Ibid., June 7, 1906.

⁶ Ibid., Dec. 6, 1905.

and was expecting a commission from the United States Board of Engineers.¹ The commission arrived, surveyed the harbor, recommended a breakwater half a mile long to be built at a cost of \$1,000,000.² This was the beginning of a twenty-five year campaign which ended in 1932 with the construction of a breakwater where the oil and lumber wharf was located when the first survey was made.

1906

Before the opening of the next salmon season, a tragedy occurred in the ranks of the fishermen. The Chinese: who had lost the abalone trade to the Japanese, who had been forbidden to dry squid, who were told that their presence in Pacific Grove was unpleasantly regarded by the Pacific Improvement Company, who had nothing but shacks and a meagre existence catching a few fish finally lost their last possessions in the Chinatown fire of 1906 -- "almost a month to the day after the San Francisco fire and earthquake".³ The Pacific Grove Daily Review ran the story.

The Pacific Grove Daily Review was rather a staid paper; the headlines on May 17, 1906 read: "Picturesque Chinatown Only A Memory; Fire Ends a Long Controversy;

¹ Monterey New Era, Nov. 15, 1905.

² Ibid., Jan. 3, 1906.

³ Monterey Peninsula Herald, March 25, 1941.

Looting Adds to the Losses Sustained by the Chinese."¹

The fire broke out at 8 P.M.; the volunteer fire department of Pacific Grove responded to the call, but before they could reach the scene, an inferno of flames was sweeping through the rickety buildings, and by 10 P.M. only nineteen of the fifty dwellings remained. An estimate of damage was difficult, but the loss was placed at \$25,000.

The origin of the fire remained in doubt; among the possibilities were: a carelessly tended trash fire, an incendiarist, the inevitable cigarette.² And there were those who were convinced that the Pacific Improvement Company had instigated the fire to remove the Chinese from desirable home sites.³

The most shameful part of the fire was:

The looting indulged in by men and boys during the progress of the fire. Stores and dwellings were entered in the confusion, and articles of all kinds freely taken, some things were stolen even after they had been removed to a supposedly safe place.⁴

The disaster threw 200 Chinese upon the mercy of the community, plus the 50 Chinese refugees from the San Francisco fire who had been taken in by their compatriots. As

¹ Pacific Grove Daily Review, May 17, 1906.

² Ibid.

³ Nellie K. Smith, Interview, Aug. 3, 1945.

⁴ Pacific Grove Daily Review, May 17, 1906.

many as possible were sheltered in the old Pacific House in Monterey.¹

As the colony was so nearly destroyed, the Pacific Improvement Company decided that the Chinese should not rebuild, but offered them a site near the El Camino cemetery. Those persons who had long suffered from the stench of drying fish prepared a protest to the P. I. Company, and Old Chinatown was never rebuilt.²

But the Chinese were loath to leave the ruins on China Point; their joss house and a few of their dwellings remained. To hasten their departure, the P. I. Company cut off their water supply and built a fence across the roadway into the village. The Chinese tore it down. The P. I. Company sent five policemen to keep the peace in Chinatown.³

The Chinese finally settled in and around Monterey, especially in the Washington Street neighborhood; a fair sized group congregated at McAbee Beach in New Monterey. They became merchants, saloonkeepers and laborers, although a few stayed with fishing -- the McAbee Beach group.⁴

The results of the 1906 salmon season are not available; J. H. Madison managed the packing house, three cents

¹ Pacific Grove Daily Review, May 17, 1906.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., May 22, 1906.

⁴ Nellie K. Smith, Interview, August 3, 1945.

per pound was the price, and Mr. F. E. Booth signed 100-150 boats to fish for S.R.P.A. The company expected a \$15,000 - \$20,000 season;¹ but whether or not their hopes were realized is not known.

As to the canning of sardines, two changes were taking place: 1906 marked the last time that purse nets were used because they had been superseded by the lampara net.² 1906 also marked the introduction of the first can-sealing machines, the Adriance brand; they were not automatic, but were built for sealing oval cans and were a great improvement over acid and soldering irons.³ No record of the season's catch or costs is to be found.

The Chinese at McAbee Beach near New Monterey had neighbors. A group of local people purchased the building and installed new machinery in the New Monterey Fishing and Canning Co. late in 1906. Twenty-five to fifty cannery hands were employed, and the organization purchased a gasoline launch, "the finest on the bay" for \$2200. Sardines and mackerel were the fish canned the first season.⁴ The installation of this local group of cannery operators marked the third successive attempt at

¹ Monterey New Era, June 7, 1906.

² Cf., p. 37.

³ K. Hovden, Interview, May 4, 1945.

⁴ Monterey New Era, Oct. 11, 1906.

making the New Monterey Fishing and Packing Company a going concern.

1907

Mr. F. E. Booth, who had become president of the S.R.P.A. in 1903,¹ was busily engaged in expanding his two plants during the first part of 1907. The salmon packing house was enlarged and a small wharf built out from it at a cost of \$5000.² Electric power replaced steam in the sardine cannery.³ And Mr. Booth purchased a new launch, his third, to supply the cannery.⁴ The sardine launch was 42 feet long with a 10 foot beam; powered by a 25 horsepower engine; the launch could travel ten knots an hour. And best of all "it is equipped with a wench (sic) for hoisting the nets..."⁵ Apparently Booth believed in letting women share the business!

In 1907, Mr. Booth signed a two year contract with the Japanese Fishermen's Union to sell S.R.P.A. their salmon for three and a quarter cents per pound. This was the first time either party had ever signed a contract for more than one year. "The Japanese Fishermen's Union

¹ Monterey New Era, Aug. 26, 1903.

² Monterey Daily Cypress, April 21, 1907.

³ Ibid., April 13, 1907.

⁴ Ibid., April 21, 1907.

⁵ Ibid., April 15, 1907.

has a membership of 125 and sells exclusively to Booth."¹

160 boats and 180 men engaged in salmon fishing that season and it was a good one; Knute Hovden was manager of the packing house, and it was not unusual for his crew of 16 men to work all night.²

The sardine cannery put out a tremendous pack in 1907; one and one half million pounds of sardines were canned; 125 people were employed in day and night shifts; and Mr. Booth paid out \$150,000 for labor and fish supplied to the packing house and cannery.³

The New Monterey Fishing and Packing Company cannery also operated during this season.⁴

The most colorful activity during the season took place on the wharf and in the bay, however. The Western Fish Company, a fresh fish concern on the steamship wharf, had in its employ a very clever young man named Pete Gusmani who worked as a commission man and bought fish to be shipped to San Francisco, the company's headquarters. Western Fish Company's biggest rival was Louie Duarte who also owned a fish market on the wharf. Louie had a weakness: he was very fond of women, pretty ones especially. Pete found out Louie's weakness; so every day, just as the

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 20, 1907.

² Ibid., June 18, 1907.

³ Ibid., Nov. 21, 1907.

⁴ Ibid., Oct. 24, 1907.

fishermen brought their catches to the wharf, dozens of attractive girls suddenly appeared at Louie's market. Louie was transported; he chatted and joked with the girls far into the afternoon. When he arrived at the end of the wharf, Pete had bought all the choice fish. Knute Hovden, F. E. Booth's packing house manager, began to wonder at Louie's tardiness and made investigations. He discovered that Pete Gusmani was hiring the girls to keep Louie away at buying time. Somehow, Louie found out about the plot too. Screaming great Italian oaths, Louie snatched a fish knife in one hand and a cleaver in the other and ran down the wharf looking for Pete. Pete saw him coming and ran for his life with Louie in hot pursuit. Pete reached the end of the wharf first and without further ado, dove in, clothes and all. He swam out into the bay, climbed aboard an anchored boat, and shinnied up the mast. He stayed there until his friends coaxed him down and told him that Louie was under control -- in a strait jacket! ¹

Mr. Booth's new sardine launch was skippered by Captain Bill Nicholls during its first season of service for the cannery. About a month before the sardine season closed, Captain Nicholls, Knute Hovden and crew were fishing for sardines in the bay. As the net (lampara, of course) was being hauled in, both men noticed a tremendous commotion

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, June 12, 1907.

in the midst of the fish and a sealion popped up. Hovden grabbed a large oar, and taking careful aim, swatted the sealion over the head, breaking the oar to bits. The sealion continued to charge around the net, gulping huge mouthfuls of Booth sardines and tearing great holes in the Booth net. Captain Nicholls was irate, the crew, helpless. Nicholls seized a sledgehammer, and, hanging one leg over the side of the boat, prepared to finish the sealion's frolic. But the sealion grabbed Captain Nicholls' leg and hauled him in for a playmate. As Nicholls emitted "yells heard in Watsonville", the sealion methodically chewed off Nicholls' clothes, piece by piece, until the Captain was picked clean. Hovden, in the meantime, had found another sledgehammer, and before the beast started on Nicholls' hide, killed the creature. Nicholls, eyes rolling, teeth chattering, and moaning with fright, was hauled aboard; the sealion came up next -- it measured 8 feet tip to tip; the remains of the net, sans fish, came last. The boat returned to Monterey. Nicholls walked home in a barrel.¹

At the end of the sardine season, Mr. Booth tried something new. Instead of sending his launches back to Sacramento, he kept them in Monterey and put them to use at deep-sea fishing off Moss Landing.² In this way, he

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Oct. 30, 1907.

² Ibid., Dec. 3, 1907.

was represented in another part of the industry -- fresh fish.

1908

The year 1908 was a competitive and therefore stimulating one in the fish industry. In the fresh fish field, the rivalry existed between the Western Fish Company and the American Fish and Oyster Company.¹ Both companies purchased new boats and replaced their buyers with more aggressive personnel.² The fish prices soared; prices for the usual varieties of fish were:

Halibut, sole and codfish:	\$.06 per pound
Salmon and sea bass:	.09 " "
Yellow-tail (cod):	.05 per fish
Skipjack (tuna):	.30 " "
Crabs:	2.75 per dozen ³

Fishermen made remarkable wages -- one Luck Lee made \$150.00 for a day's catch.⁴ Chinese fishermen were being hauled in flotillas down the coast to catch quantities of fish for the fresh fish markets.⁵ Prices remained high for three months;⁶ further records are not available.

The lampara net was standard equipment by 1908. The more efficient net demanded a more efficient boat. During

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Jan. 21, 1908.

² Ibid., Jan. 10, 1908.

³ Ibid., Jan. 7, 1908.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., Jan. 14, 1908.

⁶ Ibid., March 1, 1908.

1907, gasoline launches came from San Francisco and their catch made Monterey fishermen, who were still using sail boats, green with envy.¹ Booth's sardine fleet comprised three gasoline launches in 1907, as previously noted.

Fishermen began to get the idea and make the change from sails to engine until: "Fishing boats with sail power only are becoming very scarce in the bay. Launches have many advantages over sail boats... The variety of engines would make a good collection for a collector..."² The standard lampara sardine launch was yet to be born, however; the launches mentioned here were only power-driven salmon trollers -- which subsequently provided a model for the lampara launch.³ The impetus given salmon trolling by the adoption of the gasoline engine was tremendous between the years 1908 and 1914.⁴

Mr. Booth and S.R.P.A. got their first steady competitor in 1908. The New Monterey Fishing and Canning Company was absorbed by a firm known as The Pacific Fish Company. Capitalized to the extent of \$100,000, Pacific Fish Co. had headquarters in San Francisco, was headed by five directors,

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Feb. 22, 1907.

² Ibid., April 21, 1921.

³ W. L. Scofield, Sardine Fishing Methods at Monterey, Fish and Game Bulletin, #19, 1929, p. 31.

⁴ Fish and Game Bulletin #49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 49.

one of whom was J. H. Madison. The old cannery was enlarged and Pacific Fish Co's. manager was B.J. Senderman¹

Mr. Booth may have foreseen this development; at any rate, he had signed the Japanese Fishermen's Union for two years of salmon fishing and 1908 was the second year. Pacific Fish Co. offered three and a half cents for salmon as compared to S.R.P.A. price of three and a quarter cents per pound; but Booth had the Japanese, Booth got the fish.

The press was upset over this condition. "There should be no monopoly of the salmon packing business... those outside the contract should deliver".²

But even those fishermen who wanted to deliver to Pacific Fish Co. did so at quite a risk; the lack of a breakwater made mooring along the New Monterey shore a hazardous undertaking. Pacific Fish Co. remedied that situation by building a packing house on the steamship wharf -- right next to Mr. Booth's.³

The salmon were "finicky" in 1908; one day 1500 would be brought in -- the next day, 50. ⁴ The season lasted only six weeks.⁵ No records of catch and costs are to be found.

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Feb. 16, 1908.

² Ibid., May 20, 1908.

³ Ibid., June 4, 1908.

⁴ Ibid., July 14, 1908.

⁵ Ibid., July 30, 1908.

Fishermen complained that the bay was muddy, and blamed it on the squid. A further complaint was issued: "Fishermen using lumparde (sic) nets are destroying tons of small fish daily... no... net less than one inch mesh should be used... lots of nets of smaller mesh... used on the bay".¹ Trouble brewing.

Booth's sardine cannery had a record year. During the longest season of its existence, 1000 tons of sardines were canned by some 200 employees; \$48,000 was paid for fish and labor.²

Pacific Fish Company had only one crew of fishermen to Booth's three;³ that Pacific Fish Company had a labor shortage in the cannery is evidenced by their advertisement: "The Pacific Fish Company is in need of young ladies and other help to pack sardines. Good wages can be made".⁴ A shortage of cans forced Pacific Fish Company to close down temporarily during the season,⁵ while Mr. Booth's crews packed 18,000 cans per day.⁶ But the new company was not easily discouraged. They were solvent and

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, June 4, 1908.

² Ibid., Dec. 20, 1908.

³ Ibid., Sept. 29, 1908.

⁴ Ibid., Aug. 18, 1908.

⁵ Ibid., Sept. 22, 1908.

⁶ Ibid., Oct. 8, 1908.

ready for business in 1909.

1909

The year 1909 was such a great one for packing and canning that the press declared: "That fishing is Monterey's greatest industry there can be no denial. The Booth industries have grown phenomenally in the last nine years..."¹

Before the salmon appeared in Monterey Bay for their seasonal run a large school of whales paid a visit. Two veteran whalers, named Mike Noon and Tony Silveria, viewed the whales with satisfaction and ran home to get their boats, guns, and harpoons.² Back they ran to the wharf carrying and hauling their gear. But "when the bold whalers... appeared... there was not a monster in the bay". Noon was very unhappy; he was under contract to furnish a whale to the Smithsonian Institute.³

As for salmon, the supply during the 1909 season was tremendous; a record catch of 7000 fish was made in one day which kept both Booth's and Pacific Fish Company's packing crews working far into the night.⁴ As usual, Booth signed most of the Japanese boats -- some 110 in all. Both

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, June 22, 1909.

² Ibid., April 22, 1909.

³ Ibid., April 23, 1909.

⁴ Ibid., June 19, 1909.

companies paid three and six-tenths cents per pound.¹

This problem of boats was an annoying one to Pacific Fish Company; the salmon season was usually about two months in duration; white fishermen refused to buy or build boats for such a short season. Mr. Booth owned the Japanese; the Japanese owned the boats. White fishermen were migratory and usually without boats or funds. To remedy this situation the Pacific Fish Company built, during the year a salmon fleet of 100 boats.²

At the season's end, Booth had received 312 tons of salmon for which he paid \$23,000. Pacific Fish Company had received 200 tons of salmon and had disbursed \$15,000 for fish. 185 fishermen were employed; 145 Japanese, 40 others. Fish expenditures for both companies totaled \$38,000; "this cost, plus labor and materials will bring the entire cost to sixty or seventy thousand dollars." ³

As a sideline, Knute Hovden, manager of S.R.P.A. packing house, and S. M. Duarte, a local fresh fish dealer, smoked 9000 pounds of salmon in a little smokehouse on the wharf. It was for local consumption only.⁴

A week after the salmon season closed, the sardine

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, May 1, 1909.

² Ibid., July 1, 1909.

³ Ibid., Aug. 11, 1909.

⁴ Ibid., Sept. 15, 1909.

season opened.¹ It is interesting to note that the sardine season began when sardines were caught; there apparently was no fixed limit on the time sardines could be taken, nor on the amount that could be caught during the season.

Booth's Monterey Packing Company must have put out a tremendous pack of sardines in 1909; his expenditures for fish and labor were \$125,000.² Pacific Fish Company's expenditures were not listed.

It is appropriate, at this point, to look at Mr. Booth's sardine cannery after eight years of growth. It will be remembered that his initial pack in 1902 was 10 cases which he sent out on approval.³ His cannery at that time was a shed on the wharf. Each year thereafter, Booth added and expanded and installed and purchased until the Cannery Boat House was Booth's Crescent Brand Sardines and Mr. Booth was S.R.P.A. In 1909, the plant was supplied by three gasoline launches using lampara nets; the cannery itself covered 15,000 square feet, handled 24 tons of sardines a day, and had an annual output of 22,000 cases.⁴

The Booth cannery was organized into four departments: the first was the cleaning sheds which received and weighed the fish as they were delivered from the launch; the

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Aug. 18, 1909.

² Ibid., Dec. 19, 1909.

³ Ibid., Oct. 26, 1909.

⁴ Ibid.

sardines went next to the flaking shed where they were trimmed and dressed; then to the canning department where they were fried in oil, dried, packed in sauce, and sealed in oval cans; finally, the sardines went to the warehouse, where the cans were labeled, cased in cartons, and shipped.¹

The Booth cannery in 1909 was equipped with four canning machines of American Can Co. design. They were manually operated, but required no acid or solder. No venting of the cans was necessary; they were air-tight. Before being sent to the warehouse, the cans were finally heated in a heating machine to a temperature of 240 degrees F. which acted as a final cooking process.²

Mr. Booth himself has been described as "short and stocky and a very shrewd, wonderful man".³ His position in 1909 was president of S.R.P.A. and general manager of Monterey Packing Co.⁴ His packing house manager, Knute Hovden, was a Norwegian thoroughly trained and experienced in the fishing business.⁵

The cannery crew at Monterey Packing Company was 150

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Oct. 26, 1909.

² J. R. Perry, Interview, Aug. 17, 1945.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Monterey Daily Cypress, Oct. 26, 1909.

⁵ Ibid.

strong, comprised both men and women. Employees were paid on a piece work basis; wages averaged \$16.00 per week.¹

Booth's rival, the Pacific Fish Co., in New Monterey, had a 200 foot frontage on the sea. The company had five buildings, all new, which contained the usual departments and three canning machines like Booth's. This cannery was supplied by one launch with a hold capacity of twenty-five tons. 150 workers was average; payment was on a piece work basis. As in the Booth cannery, payday was every Monday. J. H. Madison and J. R. Nicholls headed the concern.²

During 1909, several other developments took place which are worthy of mention.

First, there was built on the wharf a fireproof warehouse for storage of gasoline. "It is estimated that there are 100 gasoline launches on the bay, consuming an average of five gallons daily... The warehouse was built... to supply... them".³

Squid was canned for the first time by A. M. Allen's Point Lobos Abalone Cannery and shipped to the Orient.⁴

Early in the year, a Chinaman named Charley Chin Yup asked permission of Monterey city trustees to build a fertilizer plant in New Monterey. He planned to extract

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Oct. 26, 1909.

² Ibid., Nov. 7, 1909.

³ Ibid., July 10, 1909.

⁴ Ibid., Aug. 8, 1909.

oil from fishheads and offal and use the rest as fertilizer; a steam pressure process was to be employed.¹

Evidently Charley Chin Yup received the permission he sought; at the end of the year, a petition was brought to the council meeting in Monterey. Something had to be done about that fertilizer plant at the foot of Hoffman Avenue in New Monterey. The petition said: "The drying of fertilizer in open air is worse than a slaughter house; and at midnight it is doubly offensive". The problem was, as always, referred to the street committee.²

The sardine found its identity in 1909, too. This came about as the result of an investigation by the Pure Food Commission at the request of eastern packers who resented the competition of Mr. Booth's product.

For over twenty years the sardines of this bay have been canned under the name of mackerel. This... is... not... the name of the fish. The Pure Food Commission objects to the name of California mackerel and has issued an edict that the fish must be canned under the name of sardines.³

Dr. David Starr Jordan declared that the Booth fish were mackerel. The Pure Food Commission was adamant. Mr. Booth had to reprint thousands of labels and his advertising campaign for California mackerel had gone for nought;

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 21, 1909.

² Ibid., Dec. 22, 1909.

³ Ibid., June 5, 1909.

he was canning sardines, and that was that.¹

As to the relative importance of salmon and sardines to the California fishing industry in terms of tonnage and dollars, the only record available is one prepared by the Department of Commerce and Labor for the year ending December, 1908. 9,171,900 pounds of salmon were caught at a value of \$470,000; 4,638,300 pounds of sardines were netted at a value of \$30,270.²

Obviously, salmon was still king in the California fishing industry. But it is interesting to note that Monterey was responsible for about one-half of the total California sardine tonnage.³ And moreover, Mr. Booth's Monterey Packing Company was the organization responsible for Monterey's remarkable sardine catch.

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, June 5, 1909.

² Ibid., Nov. 5, 1909.

³ Cf., pp. 51-52.

CHAPTER V

1910 to 1915

1910

Mr. Booth was a man with problems during the year 1910. To begin with, he made it known that the Monterey Packing Company had outgrown its site. During the last season, the cannery had paid its employees \$125,000. Mr. Booth pointed out that the payroll could be doubled if the cannery was expanded. He wrote a letter to the city trustees offering to lease the waterfront adjoining the Pacific Coast Steamship Wharf for \$700 annual rental.¹

The city then "advertised for proposals" in regard to the land in question; Mr. Booth's proposal was the only one. The city trustees refused to act on the Booth proposal; it was rumored that one member of the three was violently opposed to Booth's expansion.²

So Mr. Booth made a second offer. He would accept less waterfront footage, only 175 feet, and pay a yearly rental of \$350. He still wanted a twenty-five year lease, however. T. A. Work, a local lumber yard owner and contractor, circulated a petition which was signed by a good many Monterey notables. The petition urged the city trustees

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Jan. 25, 1910.

² Ibid.

to give Mr. Booth his lease.¹

The trustees met again to decide on Mr. Booth's offer -- the revised offer asking for 175 feet at \$350. per year. The dissenting member argued that no lease should be given. Finally, a compromise was reached. A clause was inserted which stated that Booth had to expend \$25,000 on his building and that it must be sanitary.

Manager Knute Hovden, who was present, assured the trustees that it would be up-to-date and have cement floors. The trustees decided that another meeting would be necessary.²

At the third meeting of the trustees of Monterey, F. E. Booth was granted a twenty-five year lease of 175 feet of waterfront property adjacent to steamship wharf. Yearly rental was set at \$350 to be paid in semi-annual installments. There were, however, two stipulations: first, that Booth should expend \$25,000 in building and equipping his cannery; that the cannery should be modern, with metal furnishings and cement floors; second, that the sum of \$75,000 should be expended annually on canning and packing operations when and if the seasonal run of fish warranted it.³

While the lease question seesawed back and forth, Mr.

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Jan. 25, 1910.

² Ibid., Jan. 26, 1910.

³ Ibid., Feb. 2, 1910.

Booth took a trip to Guayamas, Mexico.¹ When he returned he immediately rejected the city's lease because of the \$75,000 expenditure clause. There were, he told the trustees, plenty of fish in Mexico. Furthermore, labor costs there were fifty cents per day, while in Monterey, the cannery worker's daily wage was \$2.00 - \$3.00. He could, he said, move to Mexico. The trustees were obdurate.²

While Mr. Booth was south of the border, the salmon season had opened. The Japanese Fishermen's Union asked three and eight-tenths cents per pound for their salmon; they were planning to divide their boats between S.R.P.A. and Pacific Fish Co. as of last season. But S.R.P.A. offered three and six-tenths cents per pound. Mr. Booth was in Mexico; they could not speak to him. So, for the first time in the history of Japanese-S.R.P.A. relations, the union awarded all their boats and catch to the Pacific Fish Co.³

Oddly enough, Mr. Booth was not worried about this. He signed eighteen white fishermen for S.R.P.A. and changed his program.⁴ Instead of packing salmon, S.R.P.A. iced it and shipped it to San Francisco. The ace in Mr. Booth's sleeve was this: he owned a controlling interest in

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Jan. 26, 1910.

² Ibid., March 11, 1910.

³ Ibid., March 5, 1910.

⁴ Ibid., March 11, 1910.

Western Fish Co. which supplied a great percentage of fish to the San Francisco market. What his eighteen fishermen caught, Mr. Booth could sell.¹ S.R.P.A. salmon fishermen received four cents per pound.²

Mr. Booth's patience gave out. He asked Mrs. Cooper, the woman from whom he had originally leased the cannery site, in 1903, to renew his lease for another twenty-five years. Mrs. Cooper assured Mr. Booth that he could have the lease if the title to the land was awarded her; Mrs. Cooper was also battling with the trustees of Monterey over ownership of the land.³

Booth could not wait for the decision over the title. He began enlargements immediately. The cannery was extended north fifty feet and westward into the bay 100 feet. In this way, Booth planned to double his capacity and handle 80-100 tons of sardines per day. The Southern Pacific Railroad aided him by laying a spur track up to the cannery for shipment of case goods.⁴

Booth's improvements were: new concrete piers to support his building, a new warehouse, a new dry and fry room, new machinery of his own invention, and a lunch

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Mar. 5, 1910.

² Ibid., May 15, 1910.

³ Ibid., April 20, 1910

⁴ Ibid., Mar. 26, 1910.

room-rest room combination for the female employees.¹

Throughout the salmon season the Pacific Fish Company received twice as much fish as Booth did;² beyond that, the results of the season are not to be found.

Booth's sardine pack for 1910 was 33,000 cases; his expenses for fish and labor were \$225,000. Pacific Fish Co's. expenses were \$30,000.³

The battle between the fishermen and the Custom House commissioners broke out again. The commissioners (of N S G W) decided to make the fishermen pay rent on the ground occupied by their shacks. A letter from the Secretary of War revealed that the Southern Pacific Railroad had never obtained permission for a right of way through the reservation property. The commissioners decided to let the railroad stay; but the fishermen had to go.⁴ It was ever thus.

1911

The whales paid Monterey another visit in 1911. Old Mike Noon, the town marshal, got excited and went after his gear. This time the whale waited for him, and he shot it

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, July 10, 1910.

² Ibid., May 26, 1910.

³ Ibid., June 3, 1911.

⁴ Ibid., May 19, 1910.

just 200 yards off the steamship wharf. But it either sank or disappeared, probably the latter. The rest of the whales left very quickly. Mike Noon still owed the Smithsonian a whale.¹

Out on Point Lobos, Mr. Allen's abalone cannery had been quietly prospering for a decade. In 1911, he remodelled his plant and installed three Johnson automatic can closing machines like Booth's new ones. There was a big demand in the Orient for canned abalone and the new machines put out 12,000 cans per day.²

During salmon season, the Japanese fished for Booth and Pacific Fish at four cents per pound.³ The season opened early, and the fish were small; so Mr. Booth decided that the salmon should be put up in oval cans.⁴

Incidentally, Mr. Booth was known among Monterey cannerymen as the "father of the oval can". He adapted the oval can for sardines from a Massachusetts oval type when he first started canning. Booth used three sizes of oval can: the one pound, half-pound and quarter-pound.⁵

The salmon season was rather poor, in spite of Pete

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Aug. 4, 1911.

² Ibid., Jan. 20, 1911.

³ Ibid., Mar. 28, 1911.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ J. R. Perry and K. Hovden: Interviews: Aug. 17, 1945.

Gusmoni's prediction that it would be the biggest ever seen in Monterey. Visitors at Pacific Fish Company's packing house were allowed to buy fresh salmon at five cents per pound to be sent to friends at home.¹ But in the middle of the season, there weren't many fish to pack or send home. Half the Japanese fishermen quit trolling.² When the salmon season closed in August, payment to the fishermen by both companies totaled only \$21,000.³

It is interesting to note that the Japanese did not fish all year round. When the salmon season closed, the Japanese took their boats out of the water and stored them until the following spring. During the late summer and fall, the Japanese went into the surrounding countryside to pick fruit. They returned to Monterey during the winter to repair their gear for the coming season.⁴

Both canneries improved their facilities during the sardine season. Pacific Fish Company built an 80 foot fireproof warehouse at a cost of \$5000;⁵ and wily Mr. Booth, in order to keep steady work for his employees, installed in the bay a huge fishtrap in which he could keep forty

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, May 10, 1911.

² Ibid., July 21, 1911.

³ Ibid., Aug. 19, 1911.

⁴ Ibid., Aug. 31, 1911.

⁵ Ibid., June 17, 1911.

tons of live sardines.¹ It was all to no avail. "The canneries have had a poor season... and... will probably be open next summer".²

Mr. Booth had entered a new phase in the sardine industry, however; that was the manufacture of fertilizer and oil. Late in 1911, twenty tons of fish meal were shipped from Monterey Packing Co. to Los Angeles.³ Just as Booth had developed sardine canning so was he to pioneer the first combination of a canning and reduction plant in California.⁴

Besides suffering from a poor season, some of the fishermen were in trouble with the Custom House trustees again. This time, the trustees meant business. An eviction order was sent out and backed by the Treasury Department of the U. S. The fishermen, who had been paying \$5.00 a year to the Southern Pacific Railroad for land rental, were "in an ugly mood" and refused to budge. They threatened to take the issue before a judge.⁵

None other than Mr. F. E. Booth set an example for the fishermen. He tore down a shed which, for him, had great

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Aug, 19, 1911.

² Ibid., Dec. 30, 1911.

³ Ibid., Oct. 4, 1911.

⁴ Hatton and Smalley, Reduction Processes for Sardines in California, Fish and Game, Vol. 24, No.4, Oct.1938, p.4.

⁵ Monterey Daily Cypress, May 20, 1911

sentimental value. This shed was his first cannery, the 1902 model, a tiny building six by eight feet in size.¹ The fishermen, however, sat tight. They were worried more about being sued for back rent than the threat of expulsion.²

1912

When 1912 rolled around, the fishermen were still well established on the Custom House Reservation.³ After a visit from the Assistant U. S. Attorney, however, the fishermen changed their minds.⁴

The waterfront was quiet except for "the kicking of the squatters".⁵ By mid-February, the shacks were gone; but the fish markets on the wharf were out of commission for a while because of the government order. Many fishermen had no place to store their gear.⁶

1912 was an extremely poor year for fishing. Salmon were so scarce that the press declared: "Salmon fishing is still a gone -- but-not-forgotten part of the life of this city. It is confidently predicted by a few brave prophets that these fish will return before the opening of the

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, June 2, 1911.

² Ibid., June 4, 1911.

³ Ibid., Jan. 28, 1912.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., Feb. 1, 1912.

⁶ Ibid., Feb. 11, 1912.

Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco."¹

Booth and Pacific Fish Co. opened their sardine canneries, but were forced to shut down during the greater part of the season.²

Mr. Booth spent this quiet season in improving the machinery in his reduction or fertilizer department. He secured and installed a Dayton Garbage Dryer, the type of mechanism used by Eastern garbage disposal plants, for drying his fish meal preparatory to sacking and shipment.³

The latter part of 1912 was spent in heated debate over the legality or illegality of the lampara net.⁴

A group of Monterey's alarmists formed an organization known as: The California State Fish and Game and Forest Protective League. The function of this body was to present their recommendations for changes in the State fish and game laws to the California State Legislature.⁵ Of course, the League felt that its first duty should be to have the lampara net declared illegal because a rumor had been circulated that lampara nets destroyed millions of spawn

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, May 29, 1912.

² Ibid., Sept. 20, 1912.

³ Hatton and Smalley, Reduction Processes for Sardines in California, California Fish and Game, Vol. 24, No. 4, October 1938, p. 4.

⁴ Monterey Daily Cypress, Dec. 2, 1912.

⁵ Monterey American, Nov. 17, 1912.

and fry.¹

Local cannery operators: Booth, Senderman et al, voted down the League's plan.² Local fishermen who disliked the net and the canneries began to circulate an anti-lampara petition.³ Immediately, a counter petition was started by Knute Hovden, representing the Booth interests. This elicited the rumor that any fishermen not signing the Booth petition would not be hired by him.⁴

Hovden was furious. He wrote a long, angry ungrammatical letter to the Monterey Daily Cypress in which he stated that the hiring rumor was "just a plain lie". Furthermore, he, Hovden, had tried to keep out of the whole dispute because it was ridiculous. The Monterey American and all those opposed to the lampara net were laboring under a "miscomprehension and ignorance of the situation" said Hovden.⁵

He remarked caustically that the opposition comprised a "small group, about twelve" of "picturesque fishermen who polish the cement seats around the Custom House and talk about the good old days when the fish used to swim

¹ Monterey American, Dec. 26, 1912.

² Ibid., Dec. 23, 1912.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Monterey Daily Cypress, Dec. 24, 1912.

right up on the beach and jump into pots and pails held by fish wives. Now, with S.R.P.A. it is a graft, it is hard labor".¹

Hovden argued that the natural enemies of fish ate up a thousand times as much fish as lampara nets destroyed. "There is no more harm in using those nets than in using a gun in hunting... Both may be misused..."²

"The passing of this prohibitory law," said Hovden "will doom the only industry of its kind on the coast... Monterey will loose (sic) a good thing..."³

Hovden's comrade, Ben Senderman, manager of Pacific Fish Co., went before the Chamber of Commerce and asked them "to take action toward the retention of the lampara purse-nets... which a few fishermen would have done away with..."⁴

Of course, Hovden's letter produced a reaction. A Monterey fisherman wrote to the Monterey American. He described the destructive qualities of the "sack" or center bunt of the lampara net. Hovden's cannery shut-down statement was "ridiculous" -- any fisherman could fish just as well "with a string of gill nets", meanwhile

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Dec. 24, 1912.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

saving the spawn and fry.¹

"Lampara nets", said a fisherman, "are run by crews almost totally alien -- the 'patron' receiving the money and doling out a miserable portion to his compatriots, who do all the hard work."²

The argument stopped momentarily to witness a remarkable thing -- salmon running in the bay on the last day of December!³

1913

The salmon run continued -- it was no freak; and the price offered by San Francisco dealers during the first three months of 1913 was eleven cents per pound!⁴ During those first three months, the books at the Wells-Fargo Express Co. showed that over one million pounds of fresh salmon had been shipped out of Monterey.⁵

Early in the season, Monterey found that it had a "local Paladini". (Paladini was and is the most powerful force in the Monterey-San Francisco fresh fish "trust"). His name was Frank Morosco; his favorite trick was to corner the salmon market and force the San Francisco

¹ Monterey American, Dec. 26, 1912.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., Dec. 31, 1912.

⁴ Ibid., Oct. 10, 1913.

⁵ Ibid.

buyers to pay twelve and a half and thirteen cents per pound. He was very successful.¹ The significance of the early run of salmon is to be measured not only in terms of money. It was a new and unknown form of fishing. Salmon season had heretofore been a spring and summer business. Now, fishermen realized that salmon could be caught with hook and line during the winter months as well, and, due to the demand during those months, command an excellent price.²

By May, no more salmon were being caught; but the fish buyers had put science to work, and several small refrigeration houses had been erected to keep the fish until the best price could be secured.³

The once despised squid assumed its rightful place in 1913, too. Prior to this time the catching and private use of squid had been legal, but commercial squid fishing was prohibited. Eighteen Italian fishermen were arrested for violating this provision of the law.⁴ The salmon season, that is the spring-summer season, was approaching and squid was excellent bait. But the rest of the fishermen hesitated to take any more squid until a decision was announced.⁵

¹ Monterey American, Jan. 16, 1913.

² Ibid., Oct. 10, 1913.

³ Ibid., May 28, 1913.

⁴ Ibid., May 12, 1913.

⁵ Ibid., April 7, 1913.

Judge Michaelis set the date of the trial ahead.¹ In the meantime, a bill to negate the old squid clause of the marine preserve law was put before the legislature. It passed both houses, and the catching of squid for commercial use was legalized.²

Immediately after the bill was passed, everyone who had a boat and net went out, because the bay was alive with squid which were sold at \$12.50 per ton. Teamsters were paid \$1.50 per ton to haul the catch to the drying grounds.³ Five months later this statement appeared: "During the present squid catching, it is not out of the ordinary to take from 1000 to 1500 worth of these fish per day..."⁴

The local Chamber of Commerce worked hard for the Monterey fishing industry in 1913. This group was very much upset over an amendment to the fishing license bill which was then before the legislature. This amendment, if passed, would place an annual tax of \$100 on every alien fisherman in California.⁵

The Chamber of Commerce realized that passage of this

¹ Monterey American, May 6, 1913.

² Ibid., May 12, 1913.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., Oct. 10, 1913.

⁵ Ibid., Feb. 11, 1913.

bill would ruin the packing and canning industry in Monterey and strike at a great many Oriental and European fishermen. Consequently, the Chamber of Commerce sent a resolution to the state legislature protesting passage of the bill which "would result in increasing the cost of good fishes... and... destroy the business of fish processing on the coast".¹

The fishing license bill which was passed provided that: \$1.00 be charged as a license fee for state residents; a \$3.00 fee should be paid by out-of-state residents; a commercial fish license fee of \$10.00 be charged all fishermen so engaged, aliens or citizens. This is the first time angling and commercial licenses were issued.²

As for the lampara net, the legislature apparently didn't bother with it at all. At any rate, the entire issue was dropped until next year.³

Mr. Booth was experimenting with reduction of sardines into fish meal and oil again in 1913. The reduction department of the Monterey Packing Co. was completely overhauled. Mr. Booth announced that a "more sanitary method of manufacture is to be employed".⁴

¹ Monterey American, Feb. 11, 1913.

² Ibid., June 20, 1913.

³ Ibid., Nov. 5, 1914.

⁴ Ibid., Mar. 7, 1913.

With the fish oil extracted in the reduction process, a new enterprise was inaugurated: the manufacture of a tree spray which Booth claimed was far superior to whale oil emulsion.¹

The press paid Mr. Booth a tribute at the end of the season, in which the gratitude of Monterey was expressed. It was further claimed that: "Booth's Monterey Packing Co. is handling more sardines per day than any other single cannery in the world..."² The man who started his cannery in a 6 x 8 shed had, by the end of the 1913 season, "canned and sold over sixty million sardines..."³ (There are approximately five sardines to a pound.)

Mention should be made of the difficulties which existed between the city of Monterey and the Pacific Steamship Co. regarding the lease of the steamship wharf. After a great deal of talk and attempts at a reasonable solution as to who should own the wharf, the city decided to renew Pacific Steamship Co's. lease until 1915, after which time the wharf should become city property without cost.⁴

1914

The European war in 1914 crowded most of the local

¹ Monterey American, March 21, 1913.

² Ibid., Oct. 24, 1913.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., Dec. 3, 1913.

news out of the newspapers. There were, however, a few significant developments worthy of note.

In January of 1914, a storm struck central and coastal California.¹ Damage to the fishing fleet was small, in spite of the vehement and sometimes bitter complaints regarding the necessity of breakwater protection.²

The worst disruption caused by the storm was in washing out or otherwise damaging transportation facilities. A railroad bridge between Monterey and San Jose was washed out. This left fresh fish dealers at quite a loss; so to keep their markets, two dealers pickled their fish.³

Fishermen continued to make contracts for shipment of fresh fish to and through San Jose, despite the condition of the bridge. Automobiles were used until the bridge was repaired.⁴

Salmon sold for nine cents per pound in 1914; two and a half million pounds were caught.⁵

Dried squid was shipped to Manila and Hong Kong.⁶

A rather expensive and grim feud was taking place

¹ Monterey American, Jan. 28, 1914.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., Jan. 30, 1914.

⁴ Ibid., Feb. 3, 1914.

⁵ Monterey Daily Cypress, Aug. 20, 1914; Jan. 6, 1917.

⁶ Ibid., Aug. 25, 1914.

between the fishermen of Monterey and Santa Cruz. A loud howl of complaint was issued by Santa Cruz fishermen over the cutting of their nets by Monterey fish boats which were piloted right through them.¹

Two Santa Cruz fishermen in particular had no reason to sing: "The sailor's life is the life for me!" During the first part of the sardine season their nets were shredded by Monterey fish launches; they were repaired. Later in the season, two whales got into their nets, ate their catch, and departed after ripping holes big enough to drive a boat through. The last injustice occurred when a net full of sardines was invaded by barracuda birds -- hundreds of them. The birds got their feet in the mesh and the fishermen spent the rest of the night disentangling a net full of fowl while their fish swam languidly away.²

The Santa Cruz fishermen finally threatened to seek recourse in the law if Monterey fishermen continued to despoil their nets. Monterey offenders promised to be "more careful".³

As usual, Mr. Booth was improving the Monterey Packing Company. In the plant, a fish grader was installed. It was a large tubular affair with an overhead sprinkler and a gridiron built across the bottom of the large tube. As

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Sept. 2, 1914.

² Ibid., Sept. 12, 1914.

³ Ibid., Sept. 19, 1914.

it whirled around, the fish slipped through the gridiron or remained on top of it, according to their size. The water from the overhead sprinkler helped them to slip through the grading bars.¹

Two electric hoists were installed: one at the Booth plant and the other at steamship wharf. These expedited the handling of large loads of fish from boat to dock.²

The most significant and unusual of Booth's improvements was his floating reduction plant. He had purchased a lime-kiln barge, the Newark, and converted it into a fish meal and oil factory. On the ship were open steam vats for cooking offal, an oil press, and a batch dryer. Offal was supplied by the cannery; and when the boat was loaded with meal and oil, it docked and discharged its cargo. The Newark operated for only one season in Monterey Bay.³

The lampara net issue came up again, and Mr. Booth was aroused. He wrote a letter to several prominent citizens of Monterey in which he strongly protested any interference with the use of this net.⁴

"The lampara net," said Booth, "was introduced to me

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, July 16, 1914.

² Ibid., Mar. 24, Aug. 25, 1914.

³ Hatton and Smalley, Reduction Processes for Sardines in California; Calif. Fish and Game, Vol.24, No.4, p.4.

⁴ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 5, 1914.

many years ago for... catching sardines." He added, "... without this net, we would not be able to run our business in Monterey."¹

Booth stated that he was employing "over three hundred people... a great pity to disrupt this business... on any false pretenses."²

He pointed out that: "... a school of sardines contains, perhaps, 99-1/2% sardines... we... desire to catch them... but we don't destroy them... we are making a commercial product out of them, and... should be encouraged."³

The appeal was made to the reader of his letter to protest any recommendation of "this so-called League (California State Fish and Game and Forest Protective League -- not the California State Fish and Game Commission) which would adversely effect our sardine... interest in the Bay of Monterey".⁴

Any interested party could consult The Fish and Game Commission report by Scofield, which, said Booth, "encourages the use of this net."⁵

"The people of Monterey" he concluded, "can easily

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 5, 1914.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

satisfy themselves whether the cannery could run without the use of this net and whether we are ruthlessly destroying the fish."¹

At its next meeting, the California Fish and Game and Forest Protective League did not discuss the lampara net at all. The members discussed ducks, deer and trout.²

Near the end of the year, the sardine and squid fishermen formed an organization known as The Monterey Bay Sardine and Squid Union.³ The primary purpose of this union was to stop needless waste of sardines and squid and keep fish prices from fluctuating. Its membership was largely Italian.⁴

Considerable fish was being wasted at this time due to the fact that all the fishermen were going out after sardines and squid, and, more often than not, brought back catches in excess of the amount desired. Under the new union plan, the amount desired was to be ascertained before hand, and one or two crews delegated to secure the catch. The money earned by the crews who fished was to be distributed between the members of the union.⁵ Through

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 5, 1914.

² Ibid., Nov. 8, 1914.

³ Ibid., Nov. 11, 1914.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

supplying an exact demand, fishermen felt that the price of fish would be less apt to fluctuate.¹

The most provocative news item of the year was this: Mr. Booth asked the city's permission to build an aquarium at an estimated cost of \$10,000. The request was granted. The city also told Mr. Booth that his twenty-five year lease would soon be granted. At the end of the twenty-five year period, the site and all improvements would revert to the city.² He had asked for the lease in 1910.

Although the significance of Mr. Booth's lease lies beyond the chronological scope of this paper, certain facts should be definitely known. Mr. Booth was granted the lease. The city won its suit against Mrs. Cooper, and held title to the land. The lease was apparently retroactive, for it was asked for in 1910, granted in 1914, and expired in 1935; the time limit was twenty-five years.³ Mr. Booth's litigation with the City of Monterey from 1935-1941 would make a good novel.

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 11, 1914.

² Monterey American, Jan. 15, 1914.

³ Carl Kurzbin, Interview: August 16, 1945.

CHAPTER VI
1915 to 1920

The most outstanding feature of Monterey's fishing industry during the period from 1900 to 1915, had been its amazing growth from shed to cannery, skiff to launch, hook and line to expensive net, and one-man operator to crew. An industry which had sold fresh fish to San Francisco was now selling canned fish to America and the world. A thousand worked where one hundred had worked before.¹ Monterey's census: 1760 in 1900, was over 10,000 in 1910.² The fishing industry made a lot of difference to a lot of people, not the least of whom was F. E. Booth.

And yet, with the expansion, experimentation, and concentration on one canned product, the rest of the industry had neither failed nor disappeared. Whales still frequented the bay and despite the fact that there was no whaling station, there was talk and there were plans for a revival! Salmon was enjoying more popularity than it had known in many previous years. Squid fishing and drying were revived and prospered. And the Abalone Cannery at Point

¹ Monterey American, October 10, 1913.

² Ibid.

Lobos was doing a steady, successful business.¹

As for methods of processing fish, almost all the innovations were in the sardine field. And with the exception of canning machines, most of the operations were manual; assembly lines came later.²

But certain things were taking form as the war years commenced. Mr. Booth had begun to reduce fish, legislative action and controls were becoming increasingly important, and unionization had taken place. These trends or patterns produced a fission as time went by. The days of gentlemen's agreements and easily settled disputes were gone forever. The fishing industry gradually became a perpetual motion of competitive, interdependent parts.

1915

That Booth and other cannerymen were not unduly upset by the movement to have the lampara net declared illegal was proved when the bill prohibiting its use was brought before the legislature in 1915. The bill, which forbade the use of the net for the catching of squid, sardines and anchovies, probably would have passed, had it not been for the presence of H. A. Greene, a Monterey businessman, who

¹ On Feb. 28, 1913, the Point Lobos Abalone Cannery shipped between six and seven tons of their canned product to Honolulu.

² J. R. Perry; interview; August 17, 1945.

had headed a commission to investigate the use of the net.¹ Greene presented a most convincing case for the continued use of the net, and the anti-lampara bill was killed. "This", remarked the Monterey Daily Cypress, "practically saved the fishing industry of the bay."²

The first rumblings of state interference or control in the marketing of fresh fish were heard during 1915 when the McPherson State Commission Marketing Bill was introduced to the legislature.³ In its original form, for it was embryonic then, the McPherson Bill desired the establishment of a State Commission Market where fishermen could take their catch and receive what the catch was worth, instead of being obliged to accept what the so-called "fish trust" was willing to give them. The bill was not passed at this time.⁴

Abalone legislation in 1915 forbade the drying of meats for commercial purposes.⁵ From this time, abalone assumed its greatest importance as a fresh fish product in spite of the fact that there were five abalone canneries in

¹ Monterey American, Jan. 21, 1913.

² Monterey Daily Cypress, Feb. 2, 1915.

³ Ibid., March 18, 1915.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Fish and Game Bulletin No. 49, Bureau Commercial Fisheries, 1935, p. 108.

California by 1917.¹

As for Monterey's civic affairs, the lease on the Pacific Coast Steamship Wharf expired and the company asked for renewal. After the usual furor, the city granted the company a lease for one more year.²

There was a good possibility that the whaling industry would be revived after a lapse of nearly two decades. C. C. Meyers, a representative of California Sea Products, came to Monterey in 1915 for the purpose of establishing headquarters for the whaling industry. Monterey was to be one of four stations of operations; the other three points were to be at Trinidad, Drake's Bay and San Luis Obispo.³

Meyers said that he had secured option on two sites near Monterey for the erection of a packing house, laboratory and fertilizing plant. He explained that 75% of the oil produced by the industry would be utilized by soap manufacturers. Each station would employ two vessels and one hundred workers.⁴

The press observed that the fish industry in general would profit from the destruction of whales in Monterey Bay, since sardines and salmon were known to be favorite

¹ Fish and Game Bulletin No. 49, Bureau Commercial Fisheries, 1935, p. 108.

² Monterey Daily Cypress, Oct. 28, 1915.

³ Ibid., March 18, 1915.

⁴ Ibid.

items on the whale's diet.¹

Another firm interested in Monterey Bay's wealth was the Hercules Powder Company. This organization was interested in kelp as a source of potash used in making explosives, and gathered quantities of kelp from the bay for experimentation.²

The explosion was not from kelp or the Hercules Powder Co., but from the Pacific Improvement Company and F. E. Booth. Mr. McKaig of P. I. Co. loudly protested the taking of kelp, a natural fish food. The Hercules Powder Co. replied that this was only an experiment; if it were successful, they would go elsewhere.³

Mr. Booth went on record as being very much opposed to the gathering of kelp. If operations by The Hercules Powder Co. were not terminated, he planned to take his grievances to Washington.⁴ No further mention of the kelp gathering appears; apparently the company went elsewhere.

The fishing industry was disabled by two storms during 1915 -- one was natural and the other was man-made. In April, a sixty mile gale struck the Monterey harbor, whipping up mountainous waves and tearing loose everything that was not solidly battened down. The steamship wharf

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, March 18, 1915.

² Ibid., Sept. 16, 1915.

³ Ibid., Sept. 18, 1915.

⁴ Ibid., Dec. 1, 1916.

buckled and sagged and hung precariously. A. Napoli's fish shed, representing an investment of \$1100, was blown off the wharf and destroyed. The packing houses of Pacific Fish Co. and Mr. F. E. Booth were likewise blown off the wharf, but were partially salvaged. Heavy seas wrenched the pilings from beneath the Associated Oil Wharf, and the Monterey Packing Co. wharf also lost much of its underpinning. One hundred boats were dashed against the shore and rocks, and the net drying platform south of the wharf was demolished.¹

Damage was first estimated at \$75,000,² but after the salvaging began, the loss was closer to \$65,000.³ Mr. Booth telephoned from San Francisco to authorize immediate repairs, and said he was certain that the Monterey Packing Co. would be ready for seasonal operations.⁴

The man-made storm was the first of many such disturbances to take place in the years that followed. Early in the season, a rumor started to the effect that Mr. Booth would move his Monterey Packing Co. to Moss Landing. At any rate, he would probably install a fertilizer plant there "to replace the boat used in the harbor for that

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 30, 1915.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., May 1, 1915.

⁴ Ibid.

purpose last season".¹

When asked about removal of the sardine cannery Mr. Booth exclaimed: "It is as false as it is ridiculous".² He was, however, considering a new site for a fertilizer plant; his plans were vague.³

Regarding markets, Booth told the press that before the outbreak of the war, Germany had utilized 90% of his packed salmon output. Due to the war, that market was closed. "There are," he said, "four carloads of last year's salmon pack... in a New York warehouse... They are barely selling".⁴

Booth felt that it was "barely possible" to accede to the four cents a pound asked by the Japanese Fishermen's Association.⁵ "I've been here fourteen years or more, and the company has always made a practice of paying as much to fishermen as the market will warrant." ⁶

Booth's price for salmon was two and three cents per pound, depending on the market, and condition of the fish.⁷ The fresh fish buyers offered twelve and a half cents per

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, March 5, 1915.

² Ibid., March 14, 1915.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., March 6, 1915.

⁶ Ibid., March 14, 1915.

⁷ Ibid., March 6, 1915.

pound "live weight" for salmon.¹

Ten days later, Mr. Booth and the Japanese Fishermen's Association were deadlocked over the price issue for the coming season; the Japanese asked four cents a pound for a period of four months. Booth would not agree to this arrangement because of "poor and unsteady markets". F. I. Takagawa, representing the Japanese said that if the Booth price of two and three cents were accepted, no boat would be able to realize more than \$125.00 profit during the season; a great part of the fishermen's income would be utilized in operating expenses.² Mr. Booth went to San Francisco leaving the issue unsettled.³

The Monterey Fishermen's Protective Association, originally The Sardine and Squid Union of last season, went on record for four cents a pound or no fish. The packers refused to meet their demands.⁴ Consequently the Monterey Fishermen's Protective Association (to be known hereafter as M.F.P.A.) created an executive committee to have the last word on transactions of the association.⁵

The Pacific Fish Co. attempted to break the deadlock

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, March 9, 1915.

² Ibid., March 16, 1915.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., April 16, 1915.

⁵ Ibid.

through an offer to pay a flat rate of four cents per pound throughout the entire season insofar as fish could be marketed. Any fish in excess of the amount marketable would have to be used by the fishermen themselves. As an inducement, Pacific Fish Co. offered the fishermen the use of its packing house.¹

At a large meeting, members of the M.F.P.A. voted down the offer of Pacific Fish Co. 142 members pledged fifty cents apiece toward raising a fund which would enable M.F.P.A. to market its own fish in San Francisco.²

The next repercussion was from M.F.P.A. who claimed that Mr. Booth was unfair. Booth had made an offer of four cents per pound, said M.F.P.A.; but the offer applied only to salmon weighing over twenty pounds. The fishermen declared that 85%-90% of their normal catch weighed under twenty pounds. This would mean that three cents per pound would be paid for all but about 10% of their salmon.³

M.F.P.A. had more than 220 members.⁴ The executive committee of this organization let it be known that arrangements for affiliation with the A.F. of L. might be made; and also that M.F.P.A. would advertise in San Francisco

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 17, 1915.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., April 20, 1915.

⁴ Ibid.

for buyers for the approaching season.¹

The next attempt at settlement was made by M.F.P.A. The proposal made to Booth was that he buy salmon from the fishermen for four cents per pound: sell it to Western Fish Co. for six cents per pound, who in turn would sell it to the retailers for ten cents per pound. The consumer would pay twenty-five cents for a pound of salmon.²

The Japanese Fishermen's Association joined M.F.P.A. in this plan.³ The combined unions reached an agreement with Booth; the terms: four cents per pound for all salmon over a period of four seasons.⁴ Over one hundred fishermen signed a week before the salmon season opened.⁵ The salmon catch for the 1915 season was three million pounds.⁶

In the sardine cannery, Booth made two improvements. The first was the installation of a cold storage plant with three large rooms and a warehouse. A small quantity of ice was manufactured, and local butchers were allowed to use the freezing rooms.⁷ The second addition to the Monterey

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 22, 1915.

² Ibid., April 23, 1915.

³ Ibid., April 28, 1915.

⁴ Ibid., April 29, 1915.

⁵ Ibid., May 2, 1915.

⁶ Ibid., Jan. 6, 1917.

⁷ Ibid., May 16, 1915.

Packing Co. was a smokehouse; a limited number of fish were smoked and canned.¹ The aquarium was remodeled, and became an office building.²

Knute Hovden, for several years the manager of Booth's packing house, resigned at the end of the season. He stated that he planned to go into salmon packing for himself -- probably in Alaska.³ It is known, however, that one of Hovden's main reasons for parting company with Booth was the latter's reluctance to give up his "dirty inefficient method of cooking sardines in cottonseed and peanut oil". Hovden wanted to develop a steam process of cooking.⁴

There was an arrival in Monterey in 1915 who is worthy of note. His name: Max Schaefer; his business: fish reduction; his future: troublesome.⁵

1916

There were still the two canneries when 1916 arrived: Pacific Fish Company at New Monterey and Monterey Packing Company at Monterey. This was a banner year for fish; Messrs. Booth and Madison had neighbors and competitors.

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Sept. 23, 1915.

² Ibid., Jan. 16, 1915.

³ Ibid., Nov. 21, 1915.

⁴ K. Hovden: Interview: May 4, 1945.

⁵ Hatton and Smalley, Reduction Processes for Sardines in California, Calif. Fish and Game, Vol. 24, No. 4, p.5.

Knute Hovden had resigned from Booth's employ for a very good reason; he was planning to start his own cannery in New Monterey.¹

Hovden asked the city trustees to grant him permission to build his cannery at New Monterey. The plant, he assured the city fathers, would be a modern, clean, well-equipped establishment and would be financed largely through outside capital. His request was referred to the Street Committee.²

Hovden's request to build was granted, and the city fathers offered their moral support. T. A. Work, the contractor who owned the property on which the plant was to be located, said that he would widen an adjacent street and improve his property for the cannery site.³

A few months later, a Japanese named Shinabu came to Monterey to look over waterfront property. Shinabu was an agent for a San Francisco firm which exported fish to Japan. The firm, he said, was interested in locating in New Monterey, and he asked permission of the trustees to locate there.⁴

The following month, the request of Kersten Co. to build a cannery in New Monterey was granted by the city

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Feb. 26, 1916.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., March 8, 1916.

⁴ Ibid., August 10, 1916.

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trustees.¹ There was a protest, however, by several members of the city council who felt that canneries were eyesores and smelled. This protest was squelched by one of the trustees who made the prophetic statement that since Hovden had been allowed to build in New Monterey, all those who made similar requests would be granted the same privilege; to rule otherwise would be discriminatory.²

Shinabu was manager of the Kersten firm to be known as California Fisheries Company. Their monthly payroll to cannery workers would be \$3000, and \$6000 per month would be paid for fish.

1916 was an excellent season for sardines. Monterey's tonnage for that year was 7690.³ In October during a heavy run, the Monterey Packing Co. alone received 200 tons.⁴

Mr. Booth installed the first continuous reduction process during 1916; it was very similar to those in use today, containing such advanced features as a continuous rotary dryer for fish meal, an oil press, and tanks for the separation of oil and water.⁵ Two shipments of fish

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Sept. 6, 1916.

² Ibid.

³ California Fish and Game Bulletin No. 20, Commercial Fish Catch - 1928, p. 23.

⁴ Monterey Daily Cypress, October 15, 1916.

⁵ Hatton and Smalley, Reduction Processes for Sardines in California, Calif. Fish and Game, Vol. 24, No. 4, October 1938, p. 5.

meal (then called fertilizer, and likewise the plants producing it were called fertilizer plants) were made from the Monterey Packing Company; 50 tons were shipped the second time.¹

Booth employees who sought recreation found it in the "Booth Sardine Nine", the cannery baseball team, not quite as successful as the cannery.²

Fish oil was shipped for the first time in tank cars during the 1916 season. Booth oil, of course.³

There is no record of total case goods shipped, but Booth, Pacific Fish Co., California Fisheries Co., and K. Hovden were all in operation and all producing. California Fisheries Co.'s. plant cost \$25,000 to build and had a daily capacity of ten tons.⁴ Hovden was engaged in specialty packs; tomato puree and olive oil were used as sauce; some 2500 cases of half-pound ovals were packed in oil.⁵

Hovden did an unheard of thing: he cut off the tails of the sardines packed! ⁶ (Apparently, this was a new idea.)

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 3, 1916.

² Ibid., Oct. 18, 1916.

³ Ibid., Nov. 21, 1916.

⁴ Ibid., Dec. 13, 1916.

⁵ Ibid., Dec. 19, 1916.

⁶ Ibid.

He also packed "saalachini" or salted, pressed sardines, which were shipped in barrels, and very popular during the war.¹

The great catch in 1916 was salmon, which reached its all time peak; five million pounds were taken in Monterey Bay.² An all time record for a day's fishing was made on May 16 when 12,000 fish totaling 58 tons were caught!³

This phenomenal record is remarkable considering the amount of feuding that took place over the price of salmon during the season, which, it must be remembered was no longer a spring-summer affair, but ran sporadically during the entire year except for the closed season from September 15 - November 15.⁴

The first, or spring-summer, portion of the salmon season ran smoothly because the two unions had a four year contract with Mr. Booth. The agreement was kept; it applied to that portion of the season.⁵

During November, the salmon run started again and prices were ten to twelve cents per pound because the

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Dec. 19, 1916.

² Fish and Game Bulletin No. 49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 52.

³ Monterey Daily Cypress, May 16, 1916.

⁴ Ibid., May 14, 1916.

⁵ Ibid., Nov. 28, 1916.

demand was heavy.¹

The San Francisco "fish trust" which was composed of Paladini, Western Fish Co., International Fish Co. and others threatened to cut prices from ten cents to four cents per pound.² M.F.P.A. started making plans to market its own catch; the union desired a building on the wharf wherein all members could sell their fish.³

The San Francisco "fish trust" then made an offer of seven cents per pound for salmon until cannery contracts became operative on April 15.⁴ Mr. Booth, not to be outdone, offered seven and a half cents until March 15; from March 15 to April 15 his price would depend on market conditions.⁵ The "fish trust" urged the Japanese to work independently of M.F.P.A.⁶

The Italian and Japanese fishermen met to consider the offers, and after setting prices on all fish, including salmon, they decided to establish an open market and sell to anyone who desired to pay seven and a half cents per pound for salmon to March 15; after this date, six cents per pound was the price until the contract became operative

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 21, 1916.

² Ibid., Nov. 26, 1916.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., Nov. 28, 1916.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

at four cents per pound.¹

During this price dispute, the McPherson Bill or Market Director Bill was passed by the state legislature. This bill created a state fish exchange to have jurisdiction over the maximum price to be paid for food fish, the licensing of fish dealers (retail and wholesale), and the amount of fish to be destroyed daily.²

State legislation also placed a personal property tax on fishing launches. Everyone paid but the Italians, who constituted a majority. The law provided for seizure of the craft if the owner refused to pay the tax.³

Final notice on the tax law was given Italian fishermen who still refused. Tax receipts were asked for, and if none were produced, state and local officers started to saw the untaxed launch in half. Before the end of the day all payments had been made.⁴

The battle over ownership of the steamship wharf ended on October 7, 1916, when it became city property. It was lengthened fifty feet due to the need for rental space.⁵

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Dec. 2, 1916.

² Ibid., Nov. 25, 1916.

³ Ibid., June 10, 1916.

⁴ Ibid., June 23, 1916.

⁵ Ibid., Oct. 7, 1916.

1917

1917 began and ended with a complaint, to say nothing of the really good fight in between. The first complaint of the year was about fish meal and the plant in question was Mr. Booth's. He explained that the complaint was due to ignorance. Only fresh fish were put through the reduction process; there was nothing rotten about it. To be sure, there were "occasional odors" of cooking fish, but was that any reason for harrassing an organization that alone employed 300 people and paid out \$1000 a day for labor? Certainly not. The complaint was groundless and unjust! ¹

The next sounds of dissatisfaction came from a state senator named E. L. Rigdon who was quite sure that the abalone would soon be extinct unless the state passed a law limiting the commercial catch of these shellfish to twenty per week. Rigdon put this in the form of a bill and the restriction covered all of Fish and Game District No. 15 -- Monterey to San Luis Obispo. ²

The Japanese divers and A. M. Allen of the Point Lobos Abalone Cannery were very much upset. Allen wrote a lengthy letter to the Monterey Daily Cypress in which he cited dozens of facts as proof that the abalone needed no further legal protection. ³

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Feb. 1, 1917.

² Ibid., Feb. 24, 1917.

³ Ibid., Mar. 5, 1917.

Probably his most telling arguments were these: His crews had taken about 100 dozen abalones a year for several years from one large rock 50 by 75 feet without depleting that supply. The only abalone of interest to the commercial fisherman was the red abalone, admittedly well protected by law. Canned abalone was the cheapest seafood on the market already; any further legislation would kill the abalone industry.¹

No further mention is made of the Rigdon Bill; no legislation of this nature is in force. It is reasonable to suppose that the bill, like many others sponsored by "calamity howlers", was quickly killed.

As to salmon price, there was more than a complaint -- there was a strike. It will be remembered that in 1915, over 100 fishermen signed a contract to supply Mr. Booth with salmon at four cents a pound over a period of four seasons. This contract also provided that five percent of the money paid to the fishermen be withheld by the cannery and placed in the bank as a guarantee of good faith. At the end of four years, the fund would be returned to the fishermen if the contract had been kept; if the contract was broken by either party, the fund was subject to forfeiture.²

By 1917, the operational costs of salmon fishing had greatly increased according to the fishermen. Gasoline

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Mar. 5, 1917.

² Ibid., April 17, 1917.

prices had risen ten cents per gallon; distillate prices, five cents per gallon; hook and line costs were 100% more than they had been in 1915; rope that cost seven cents per pound in 1915 cost thirty cents per pound in 1917.¹

One hundred pounds of salmon at four cents per pound would gross at \$4.00; less a 5% deduction, the fisherman had \$3.80. His gas, hooks and lines, and bait cost \$2.00. He cleared \$1.80. So the fisherman, rather than make \$1.80, made nothing. He went on strike for five cents per pound and waited.² The next day the M.F.P.A. and Japanese Fishermen's Association, co-signers of the original contract, asked for six cents per pound.³ Neither Booth nor the fishermen made any definite move to get together; so the fishermen decided to market their own fish rather than accept four cents per pound from "Shylock" Booth.⁴

But marketing their own fish would be in violation of the fishermen's contract to deliver salmon to Mr. Booth on and after April 15 for four cents per pound. They were a week overdue. Colonel Harris Weinstock, who had been made State Market Director by the McPherson or Market Director Bill passed the previous year, declared that the state fish

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 17, 1917.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., April 18, 1917.

⁴ Ibid., April 21, 1917.

exchange would not market the salmon because of the contract violation. Weinstock had evidence to the effect that Booth had paid \$111,650.40 in cash for salmon the preceding year. That sum provided each boat engaged in fishing a seasonal income of \$1200 or \$7.60 per day for 157 fishing days.¹

Fishermen complained about the rise in the cost of gasoline. An investigation proved that few fishermen used gasoline; most of them burned distillate which had risen two and one-half cents in two years.²

But the strike continued and Mr. Booth was losing on three counts: 1) salmon from Monterey lost color as the season progressed and competed with the lowest priced salmon on the market; 2) mild-cured salmon which went to Germany was no longer shipped because of the war; 3) the fresh fish market glutted easily.³

The San Francisco "fish trust", namely Paladini and Cardinelli, went into action. Paladini bid for the Japanese catch at six cents per pound; Cardinelli bid for the entire catch at the same price. Monterey fishermen would have liked to do business, but there were two complications: 1) the union could not sublet the wharf concession 2) the

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 22, 1917.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., April 26, 1917.

union could not add space. Permission to do both was requested of the city and summarily refused.¹

Cardinelli suddenly decided to call the whole thing off; it looked risky and difficult. This left the fishermen with no market. They had not fished for ten days, either. Furthermore, their strike had left a good many packing house employees without work.²

The Japanese decided to go back to Mr. Booth; the Sicilians (M.F.P.A. was actually an Italian union) preferred unemployment. Mr. Booth awarded the Japanese a half-cent per pound bonus to be paid at the end of the season in recognition of their loyalty. The Sicilians let it be known that they could go fishing any time.³

M.F.P.A. members planned to market their own fish as soon as power winches could be installed on the wharf to expedite handling.⁴ When the winches were installed, no fish were to be caught. Meanwhile, Mr. Booth had taken control of the San Francisco market and sat complacently by while M.F.P.A. struggled. Booth's satisfaction with the prevailing status was due to the fact that he was adequately supplied by the Japanese. He had all the salmon he could market as the market was limited by the war.⁵

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 26, 1917.

² Ibid., April 25, 1917.

³ Ibid., April 28, 1917.

⁴ Ibid., April 29, 1917.

⁵ Ibid., May 1, 1917.

When it appeared that M.F.P.A. fishermen were really going to try and market their fish, Mr. Booth sued them in order to preclude their making other contracts.¹ The fishermen answered his suit by saying that Booth himself had violated the contract by accepting non-union fish; furthermore, M.F.P.A. claimed that the contract was illegally drawn up.² Booth retaliated by demanding \$200,000 damages; he had been unable to fulfill his contracts because the fishermen had broken theirs. The suit, Booth explained, was preliminary to injunction proceedings to restrain the defendants from disposing of their fish to other buyers.³

The suit was settled the following year;⁴ during the 1917 season the Japanese alone fished for Mr. Booth -- just like old times. When last heard from in 1917, M.F.P.A. had filed a \$15,000 counter claim against Booth for recovery of the bank fund, which, they claimed, Booth had forfeited.⁵

In spite of legal entanglements, fishing prospects were unusually good. "Canners agree that this will be the banner season in Monterey for sardines.... Some of the canneries are complaining that they are short of help..."⁶

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, May 10, 1917.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., April 18, 1917.

⁵ Ibid., May 16, 1917.

⁶ Ibid. August 28, 1917.

1917 was a "banner season" for a number of reasons, one of the most important of which was the status of the European markets.

In 1917, Europe had been laid waste by three years of war. Natural resources, such as tin plate and other metals, olive oil and other packing ingredients, were scarce. In addition to these facts, the influenza epidemic had resulted in a quarantine for a considerable quantity of European products.¹

The result of these economic derangements was a great demand for American canned goods.² This demand was a tremendous stimulus to the California fishing industry in general; eighteen sardine canneries blossomed out on the Pacific Coast, many of them reconverted tuna canneries.³ Why the switch to sardines? Because they were cheap to buy.

During the early days, from 1903 until 1906, sardines sold for seventy-five cents per hundred pounds or \$15.00 per ton.⁴ This was due principally to the "use of the huge purse-seine nets and the double-ended Sacramento seine boats" which required a large crew.⁵ But with the introduc-

¹ California Fish and Game, Sardine Number, Vol. 24, No. 4, October 1921, p. 198.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ K. Hovden: Interview, May 4, 1945.

⁵ California Fish and Game, Sardine Number, Vol. 24, No. 4, October 1921, p. 198.

tion of the smaller lampara net which was more efficient, and easier to handle and required a smaller boat, the cost of operations was reduced to such a point that during 1915, 1916 and 1917, sardines sold for \$4.00 to \$6.00 per ton.¹ Furthermore, there was a domestic demand for canned fish and sardine meal which was rich in protein and made excellent stock and poultry feed.²

That is why there was a prediction for a "banner season"; it also explains the sudden desirability of waterfront sites in New Monterey.

Mr. Booth made several innovations to meet the demand. First, he installed equipment for packing sardines "French style" in olive oil; this was a "small fish" pack and put up in quarter pound ovals.³ He also commenced the canning of the grayfish shark, previously discarded as worthless; Booth had a new process.⁴ To supply his tremendous need for tomato sauce, Booth built and equipped an entire cannery in the center of the California tomato district at Centerville, Alameda County, California.⁵ Booth planned a three story cannery on his Monterey site -- a \$100,000 structure

¹ W.L. Scofield, Sardine Fishing Methods at Monterey, Fish and Game Bulletin No. 19, 1929, p. 17.

² Max Schaefer: Interview: August 17, 1945.

³ Monterey Daily Cypress, Jan. 14, 1917.

⁴ Ibid., May 16, 1917.

⁵ Ibid., Aug. 24, 1917.

of reenforced concrete.¹ For some reason, it was never built.² Booth did go up in the air in this respect: he built two ten thousand gallon tanks for sardine oil from the reduction plant atop his cold storage department.³ In the reduction plant itself, he installed a De Laval separator for extracting oil from "foots" or oil and water settlings.⁴

K. Hovden was right on Booth's heels. To supply the demands from France, England and other European countries, Hovden put in facilities for the canning of wild game. A new building was erected containing three departments for cooking, packing, and storage. Geese, ducks and Belgian hares were supplied from San Joaquin County and put up in fricasees, stews, and sautes. Hovden hired M. Julliard, Del Monte's famous chef, as his manager. The enterprise cost \$10,000; coupled with his canning interests, this plant enabled Hovden to operate all year round.⁵

Hovden was not too busy to rebuke the city trustees, however. He told them that David and Ocean View Avenues were almost impassable; every time a team and wagon came by, clouds of dust filtered into his cannery. He asked

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Oct. 2, 1917.

² J. R. Perry: Interview: Aug. 17, 1945.

³ Monterey Daily Cypress, July 7, 1917.

⁴ Ibid., May 4, 1917.

⁵ Ibid., Oct. 4, 1917.

that the streets be graded and made passable "to remove this blot on our industry." ¹

Both Hovden and Booth installed the newest can sealing machines: The Johnson Max-Ams which could turn out 20,000 cans per machine per day. Booth already had three, now had five; Hovden received three. ²

Two new canneries were built. B. J. Senderman, formerly manager of Pacific Fish Co., erected a plant at the foot of Hoffman St. and Ocean View Ave. in New Monterey. The new establishment consisted of three buildings: one over the water for receiving and cleaning; one connected to the cleaning building was used for packing and warehouse; the third, for shipping. Concrete floors were built and the newest machinery installed. The cost: \$50,000; number employed: 250. Its name: Carmel Canning Company. ³

The other cannery has a rather amusing story connected with it. A. M. Allen, the Point Lobos abalone canner, secured a New Monterey waterfront site of 150 feet for the construction of a sardine cannery.

He needed a little capital. One day as he stood looking over his site, a man named George Harper approached him. Harper was chauffeur to a rich Mrs. Murray who owned a great strip of waterfront property right amidst the

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, July 31, 1917.

² Ibid., July 28, 1917.

³ Ibid., Dec. 11, 1917.

canneries. Harper asked Mr. Allen if he planned to build a cannery; Allen said he did. "Listen, Mr. Allen," said George, "I'm gettin' awful darn tired of drivin' that old woman around!" Allen said he was sorry to hear it. "I've got \$9000," said Harper. "Oh," said Allen; "well, George, if you want to put your money into this cannery we'll be partners." The deal was made.¹

The Allen-Harper Cannery cost \$60,000; the rest of the capital needed was supplied by local people.² The new cannery was called the Monterey Canning Co.

There was also a man named Chadney who had no cannery; he bought sardines for three cents per pound, salted and pressed them (saalachini) and sold them for seven cents per pound.³

There is no report on the 1917 output of sardine case goods canned at Monterey; it is known that the state total was about one million cases (one pound, -- half-pound, and quarter pound oval cans -- 48 one pound ovals per case) of canned sardines.⁴

The California Sea Products Co., in the market for a whaling station site, announced plans to build at Moss

¹ J. R. Perry: Interview: August 17, 1945.

² Ibid.

³ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 20, 1917.

⁴ Ibid., Feb. 10, 1919.

Landing; Monterey was not suitable.¹

Legislation during 1917 of importance to the fishing industry was the tax on fish: ten cents per ton for sardines and herring; fifty cents per ton for salmon and tuna. Estimated annual revenue from Monterey: \$300; from the rest of the state \$1300.²

The complaint at end of the year came from the city trustees. A firm known as Western California Fish Co. asked the city for a lease of 300 feet of waterfront property between Tyler and Washington Sts. in Monterey. The press got behind the idea -- a \$100,000 industry for Monterey would be wonderful. The city fathers were perplexed; they felt the line had to be drawn somewhere. 300 feet of Monterey's choicest waterfront property? Never! Their objections were these: 1) the municipal wharf was overtaxed already 2) a new wharf should and would be built where the cannery desired its lease 3) Western California Fish Co. could supply its own facilities (wharf) thereby taking revenue from the city 4) the site was too valuable: "we must consider the tourists..." 5) "grant one lease and you grant them all"³. Western California Fish Company's lease proposal was refused.

So ended the year's business.

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Feb. 18, 1917.

² Ibid., Mar. 23, 1917.

³ Ibid., Dec. 19, 1917.

1918

At the beginning of the year 1918, six canneries were either in operation or in the final stage of construction. They were: Monterey Packing Company (Booth); Pacific Fish Co. (Madison); K. Hovden Food Products; California Fisheries Co. (Kersten); Carmel Canning Co. (Senderman); Monterey Canning Co. (Harper & Allen).

~~During the year, two more canneries joined the ranks.~~
The first, Field and Gross Inc., was located in New Monterey and named for two of its directors, E. B. Gross and Walter M. Field. E. B. Gross had formerly owned an express agency in Monterey; Walter M. Field was a local capitalist.¹

The second, Bayside Fish Co., received little attention from the press; it was reputedly owned by two wealthy Chinese from Oakland.²

A third new cannery is mentioned: Alaska-California Fish and Packing Co. started by F. H. McGehee.³ If this cannery operated, it did so with great secrecy, for it is never mentioned again.

As for technical improvements, the trend seemed to be away from canning and towards reduction. The Monterey Canning Co. installed a new fish meal plant as an adjunct to the cannery. It was the same continuous process

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 12, 1918.

² K. Hovden: Interview: May 4, 1945.

³ Monterey Daily Cypress, Jan. 26, 1918.

reduction unit that Booth pioneered in 1916; two men were required for its operation, and it produced 1500 pounds of meal per hour. The plant cost \$10,000, was designed by H. Bergen, a Swedish inventor. This plant produced no obnoxious odor.¹

The installation of reduction plants was almost a necessity during the war due to the greater amounts of fish canned, and therefore, the increased amount of fish offal for disposal.² Prior to reduction (or fertilizer or fish meal plants as they were called at that time), the disposal of offal had been a problem; the Fish and Game Commission ruled that it should not be dumped in the harbor, consequently, barge loads of offal were hauled beyond the three mile limit of state jurisdiction and dumped. This service to the canner cost as much as \$3.00 per ton of offal.³

As a consequence, Mr. Booth, who left no fish scale unturned, developed the sardine reduction process, step by step, as we have discovered. His process was used by three other canners in 1918: Harper, Hovden and Madison.⁴

Although the press made no mention of the fact and

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Aug. 12, 1918.

² Hatton and Smalley, Reduction Processes for Sardines in California; California Fish and Game, Vol. 24, No. 4, October 1938, p. 5.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

many cannerymen refer to it jokingly, there was, during the war, a small plant called Monterey Fish Products Co. engaged in reducing offal which its owner, Max N. Schaefer, purchased for \$4.00 per ton from cannerymen who had no reduction unit. As the price of sardines rose and the price of case goods dropped, Schaefer continued to make money "hand over fist".¹ A few years later, everybody had heard about Schaefer and his plant; he became notorious because of his legal battles with the Fish and Game Commission.

The only mention of case goods in 1918 was the statement that Bayside Fish Co., Carmel Canning Co., and California Fisheries Co. would not can any more sardines for a short time; they had too many cans awaiting shipment.²

Just across the Monterey Bay, a new venture commenced in 1918 -- the Moss Landing Whaling Station, operated by California Sea Products Corp., and managed by Captain Dedrick.³ The company's project had been hindered by the war; the harpoon guns which had been ordered from Norway in 1916 did not arrive until two years later -- in December 1918. The company purchased two steamers upon receipt of the guns and planned to employ fifty men in the plant, and a crew of twelve on each steamer. With such equipment and crews, Captain Dedrick was confident that they could take

¹ Max N. Schaefer: Interview: August 18, 19, 1945.

² Monterey Daily Cypress, Aug. 21, 1918.

³ Ibid., Sept. 16, 1918.

ten whales per day during the whaling season.¹

In Monterey things were seething as usual. Mr. Booth's suit against the M.F.P.A. was settled through a compromise. The court ruled that all fishermen who personally signed with Booth would be required to continue fishing for him at a new price set by the federal food administrator. The forfeit fund to be retained by Booth until the end of the contract when it would return to the fishermen.² Over 100 M.F.P.A. fishermen personally signed with Booth in 1915; only 27 were fishing in Monterey at the time of the suit settlement; the other fishermen were fishing elsewhere.³

The annual war over salmon price per pound was rapidly becoming an institution. M.F.P.A. representatives went to San Francisco to see State Market Director Harris Weinstock about the price of salmon. Weinstock set it at six and a half cents per pound; the fishermen wanted more, of course.⁴ They contended that a net average of \$2.43 per day was not a living wage, and insisted that the price be raised.⁵

The next month, Ralph F. Merritt, federal food administrator, assumed control of deep-sea fishing.⁶ Merritt's

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Dec. 12, 1918.

² Ibid., April 17, 1918.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., March 20, 1918.

⁵ Ibid., March 21, 1918.

⁶ Ibid., April 15, 1918.

first act was to set a price on salmon: nine and a half cents per pound, average price. Salmon that went to the fresh fish markets were usually under 18 pounds; they would bring the fisherman seven and a half cents per pound; large salmon, 18 pounds or over, would go to the packer at eleven and a half cents per pound; average, said Merritt, would be nine and a half cents per pound to the fisherman.¹

State Market Director Weinstock desired to keep the fresh fish price to the consumer at twenty cents per pound. Under Merritt's ruling, Weinstock could cite figures and percentages to prove that fresh salmon would cost the consumer twenty-two and a half cents per pound.²

Merritt and Weinstock and representatives of three unions: M.F.P.A., Japanese Fishermen's Association and Monterey Fishermen's Union No. 22 (also known as the American Union), met to discuss price. Merritt represented the Federal government which was interested in packed fish for the armed forces; Weinstock represented the state, and was empowered to set a maximum price on fresh fish; the fishermen represented themselves and requested nine and a half cents per pound for salmon -- no double price.³

Merritt agreed with Weinstock, not the fishermen, and set a single price of seven and a half cents per pound on

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 17, 1918.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., April 28, 1918.

all fish, whether they were sold to fresh fish markets or packers. 120 Italian fishermen and 80 Japanese fishermen went on strike.¹

Merritt refused to confer with the fishermen who claimed that his price ruling had been fixed after the hearing had been held; they insisted on another hearing because Merritt's order was in the nature of a contract, and any change in price should be considered by all contracting parties.²

Merritt telegraphed the unions and told them to start fishing or their licenses would be revoked. Weinstock added that fishermen had been making in excess of \$100 per week at the former double price due to the size of the fish; at seven and a half cents per pound, they would still make a good living.³ The fishermen said their strike was justified; they spent long hours at skilled work; they had to go out every day, and many times caught no fish; for several years they had made hardly enough for food.⁴

Both the American and Japanese unions wanted to return to work, but were afraid to because of the pressure applied by M.F.P.A., the Italian union.⁵

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, May 11, 1918.

² Ibid., May 13, 1918.

³ Ibid., May 14, 1918.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., May 15, 1918.

A delagation of fishermen went to San Francisco to see Merritt and settle the dispute. He made a final ruling which Weinstock issued to all fishermen: salmon were to be divided into two equal piles, one pile going to the packers for mild curing at a price of eleven and a half cents per pound; the other pile would go to fresh fish dealers at seven and a half cents per pound. The fishermen would average nine and a half cents. Fishermen were agreeable except for one thing: no provision was made for the weight of salmon; suppose three quarters of the catch were curing size? The fresh fish dealer paid only seven and a half cents for what amounted to eleven and a half cent salmon; the packers protested that a catch comprised of one quarter curing size fish would cause them to pay eleven and a half cents for seven and a half cent fish.¹

Merritt told the fishermen they were receiving an average of nine and a half cents per pound; that was their demand, that was what they would receive. No further complaints would be heard.²

No sooner had the salmon strike been settled than the same argument took place over the price of sardines. The sardine fishermen at this time were actually represented by the boat captains who made contracts with individual cannerymen for a season at a time; the contracts were at

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, May 17, 1918.

² Ibid., May 28, 1918.

first written, but so much leeway was required by both parties that the verbal contract was substituted. Under this arrangement, the contract could be terminated by either party; price and tonnage limit clauses were open to the widest fluctuation and disputes were numerous.¹

And so it was, before the 1918 sardine season; the fishermen demanded more than \$10.00 per ton for sardines. All canners and all union representatives were present at the meeting over price; K. Hovden suggested that the whole problem be given to Ralph Merritt. This idea was agreed upon and a hearing was opened.²

For some strange reason Mr. Booth felt philanthropic that season, and without further ado began payments of \$12.50 per ton to his crews.³ But the rest of the sardine industry went right on paying \$10.00. A month later, still angry at Merritt for refusing their demand for an increase, the fishermen went on strike for \$12.50 per ton. Immediately the crews were rounded up and questioned as to why they did not fish; all had excuses. They were told that they must fish for \$10.00 per ton with a load limit of 10 tons and \$5.00 per ton for excess or damaged fish or lose their licenses.⁴ All crews but one fished the next night; rumor

¹ W.L. Scofield, Sardine Fishing Methods at Monterey, Div. of Fish & Game, Bulletin No. 19, 1929, pp. 18-19.

² Monterey Daily Cypress, June 6, 1918.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., July 6, 1918.

had it that Mr. Merritt would be asked for another hearing on sardine price. In the meantime, order was maintained by soldiers from the Presidio.¹

The fishermen were becoming an unruly lot, the canners decided, and they formed the Monterey Fish Canners' Association to deal with the organized fishermen during emergencies. The officers: Madison, Hume (Booth's manager) Allen, Pugh (manager of Bayside Fish Co.) and Gross.²

The odor problem was listed as a nuisance, and an ordinance forbidding canneries to emit obnoxious odors was passed by the city council. Councilman Long admitted that some odors were impossible to eliminate; the ordinance would be enforced "with discretion."³

The United States Department of Labor ruled that canneries could employ children over twelve and under fourteen years of age if a state permit was issued to the child. An eight hour day was maximum for all children under eighteen years of age.⁴

1918 was a grim year for the fishing industry, a year filled with negotiations, strikes and re-negotiations. The element of suspicion pervaded the holiday festivities.

In the old days, the Fourth of July had been celebrated

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, July 8, 1918.

² Ibid., Sept. 5, 1918.

³ Ibid., Jan. 3, 1918.

⁴ Ibid., June 15, 1918.

with the usual fireworks, a big fish feed, boat races and so forth. The Japanese always bought red rock cod and drank saki. Monterey had a whirl.¹

But in 1918, the big plans fell through. The Japanese refused to indulge in a tug of war with the Italians because of the Italians' advantage in weight; the Italians refused to wrestle with the Japanese because they used jiu-jitsu. The crowd was disappointed.²

The sardine pack was a bit of disappointment too; only 136,632 cases of one pound oval cans were put out.³

1919

1919 was a turbulent year; it began with a strike and ended with a storm.

The Monterey Fishermen's Organization, and amalgamation of the American, Italian and Japanese unions,⁴ sent a request to Market Director Harris Weinstock; they asked fourteen cents per pound for winter salmon. Weinstock was in Washington at the time; his assistant, Mr. Bigelow, replied that any agreement the fishermen had with wholesalers would not be interfered with, pending Weinstock's

¹ These festivities were reported annually by the Monterey Daily Cypress.

² Monterey Daily Cypress, July 4, 1918.

³ Fish and Game Commission, 26th Biennial Report, 1918-1920, p. 130.

⁴ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 5, 1919.

return.¹

The next news of Monterey Fishermen's organization was their issuance of a loud and lusty complaint urging the abolition of the state market as run by Weinstock. The union claimed that Weinstock's methods of operation failed to provide the fishermen with a decent price for their fish. The middle man was reaping the profits; the consumer was forced to pay an unreasonable price. The union suggested that a new system be substituted giving the fishermen more, charging the consumer less.²

The union held a meeting and passed a resolution demanding the repeal of the Market Director Act. The fishermen also voted to appropriate funds for a new union fish house at a cost of \$20,000. All fish caught by union fishermen would be sold then at prices set by the union. If the dealers would not accede to these prices, fishermen would market their own fish; they claimed to have a \$100,000 market in San Francisco.³

Colonel Harris Weinstock returned from Washington and clipped the price of salmon from fourteen cents per pound to ten cents per pound on the first of April.⁴ The fishermen's winter price was due to run until April four-

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 5, 1919.

² Ibid., March 8, 1919.

³ Ibid., March 28, 1919.

⁴ Ibid., April 2, 1919.

teenth. Furthermore, Weinstock refused to allow fishermen to market their own fish.¹

The result: three thousand fishermen throughout the state went on strike to protest Weinstock's price rulings;² Monterey was not alone.

During this deadlock, the state legislature was considering Senator Scott's bill to create a state fishery director to take the supervision of the state's fish industry from Weinstock's control.³ Consequently, the fishermen asked Weinstock to suspend his price fixing until the legislature stated its policy. Weinstock was incensed at what he termed "the grossest sort of insolence".⁴ He added that "all fish would go into fertilizer" if fishermen were allowed to fix their own prices; the market was "unstable".⁵

A measure fostered by the unions, to repeal the State Market Director Act was defeated in the legislature.⁶

On the promise that the Scott bill to create a new fishing industry supervisor would be signed by Governor Stephens, salmon fishermen at Monterey returned to work after their seventy-two day strike. What was more, they

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 4, 1919.

² Ibid., April 3, 1919.

³ Ibid., April 2, 1919.

⁴ Ibid., April 5, 1919.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., April 16, 1919.

began marketing their own fish at two newly built union fish houses; the fishermen sold fresh salmon directly to the retailer at \$15 per 100 pounds; to the consumer at seventeen and a half cents per pound.¹ Mild curing was done and orders were numerous.² Even the city of Monterey offered to help the fishermen by acting as a clearing house.³

But everyone acted too soon. Governor Stephens did not sign the Scott bill. Weinstock remained in power.⁴ What he did with it was not reported. But the last of the salmon strikes was over; sardines were the big issue from now on.

It seems pertinent to remark at this point that salmon landings at Monterey went through a steady decline from 1916 through 1925. The remarkable 5,000,000 pound catch of 1916 had dwindled to 1,500,000 pounds by 1925.⁵ The salmon had lost its place forever in Monterey's fishing industry.

As previously stated, crews and boat captains had the same status in the Monterey Fishermen's Organization, and prior to its establishment, in their separate unions. In

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, April 23, 1919.

² Ibid., April 24, 1919.

³ Ibid., May 1, 1919.

⁴ Ibid., May 28, 1919.

⁵ Fish and Game Bulletin No. 49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 52.

the midst of 1919's turbulence, the crew members broke away from the captains and formed their own union.¹

The first act of the infant union was, of course, to call a strike for \$15.00 per ton for sardines. The fishermen claimed that the price of \$10.00 per ton paid last year allowed the boat captains a good profit; one-half the crew members had failed to make expenses at this figure. Therefore, 300 men, comprising 39 crews, were on strike for \$15.00 per ton.²

The Monterey Cannerymen's Association held a meeting and decided to offer the fishermen \$12.00 per ton; the fishermen were informed and held a meeting to consider.³

The cannerymen issued an ultimatum: \$12.00 per ton and not a cent more. They would, they protested, lose heavily on contracts if \$15.00 were paid because of the prices of tin and oil and also the fact that sardines were selling for fifty cents less per case than before.⁴ All fishermen accepted the \$12.00 price, and the next night the fleet went out.⁵

As to the canneries themselves, there was no new

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, July 21, 1919.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., July 22, 1919.

⁵ Ibid., July 23, 1919.

construction announced during 1919. However, a firm called California Fish Co. was mentioned.¹ Its origin and operations are indeterminate. (Possibly the firm referred to was Kersten's California Fisheries Co.)

Improvements were made by Hovden and Pacific Fish Co. Although Hovden had a cannery, reduction plant and wild game combination, he apparently was not satisfied. So he expanded and outfitted a fruit canning department; the fruit was trucked in from nearby Watsonville one day and canned the next.²

Pacific Fish Co. built a new warehouse across the street (Ocean View) from the cannery; connecting the two buildings with an overhead power conveyor upon which finished goods were transported for storage and shipping ((on the Hoffman Avenue, "Fish Express"). In the cannery, two new fish dryers capable of handling fifty tons per hour were installed; they were the largest in use in New Monterey.³

Mr. Booth's old trouble popped up again -- his cannery smelled. The city council was highly irritated by the odor and Booth's negligence in allowing "dead and spoiled fish" to remain on the premises. A statement was issued charging that the plant was a nuisance and guilty of a misdemeanor.

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 25, 1919.

² Ibid., July 29, 1919.

³ Ibid., August 7, 1919.

Two council members also had a theory that the odor was substantially increased by the Moss Landing Whalery.¹

The whalery, incidentally, was doing a thriving business; during 1919, two hundred whales were brought in. Whale oil sold for \$4.00 per gallon.² This remarkable record deserves an explanation.

Whaling in 1919 and thereafter could be profitable only if the most destructive methods were employed. This meant that a gunner shooting a whale had to kill it; it also required that every part of the whale be used or reduced into oil, fertilizer, and chicken feed.³

Whalebone, contrary to popular opinion, was never very valuable with the one exception of that furnished by the right whale, which was seldom taken; in 1919 right whales were never captured on the Pacific Coast.⁴

In modern shore whaling, the steam whaling boat, often of light steel construction, had taken the place of the wooden whaleboat with its six man crew which was employed in old shore whaling. The steam whaler could cruise a hundred or more miles in search of prey; it was manned by a crew of twelve men. Bomb lances were a thing of the

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, August 7, 1919.

² Ibid., October 21, 1919.

³ E. C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bulletin No. 6, October 1922, p. 12.

⁴ Ibid.

past; the modern harpoon contained a twelve pound bomb which usually caused a mortal wound. Nor did sinking of the whale make any difference; in that event, a two inch rope attached to a power winch brought the whale to the surface where it was inflated by an air hose. Whales were either towed in immediately or abandoned and "flagged" so that they could be secured later.¹

Blubber was no longer stripped at sea nor at a quay near the station. The Moss Landing Whalery had a huge platform which could accomodate three or four whales at a time. The whales were hauled onto the platform by steel cables attached to power winches. Blubber was cut in four large lengthwise strips by men with "blubber spades". A cable was fastened to the forward end of a strip and the blubber was ripped off. Next, the flukes, fins and jaw were removed; the entrails came out in one mass. The tails were pickled and sent to Japan where they were considered a great delicacy.²

The blubber was minced and "tried out" in the thirty-six large cooking vats heated by steam pipes. Whereas the carcass in former times was cast adrift as worthless, the Moss Landing Whalery found use for every bit of it, reducing it into fertilizer, poultry food, and bone meal.³

¹ E.C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bulletin No. 6, October 1922, p. 13.

² Ibid., p. 15.

³ Ibid., p. 14.

The oil was manufactured into three or four grades to be used in soap, paint, leather dressing etc.¹ Oil sold for \$4.00 per gallon or \$170 per ton in 1919.²

The Moss Landing Whalery, owned and operated by California Sea Products, had an uncertain future. It could function if whales could be secured and if prices for by-products were stable. The whaling industry was making its last stand.

The end of the year brought a terrific storm to Monterey which had had a rather stormy time of it already. A northwester struck the harbor with devastating force; ninety-three sardine lighters and launches were piled on the beach; forty or fifty of them had their machinery irrevocably ruined. The Southern Pacific depot wharf was struck by drifting boats and almost demolished. New Monterey shoreline suffered very little damage, due to its natural protection. This storm crippled the fishing fleet to a very great extent; new boats were hard to come by, especially in a short time.³

Naturally, the city of Monterey could not replace the boats lost. But a mass meeting was held in which Councilman C. A. Metz insisted that all boats be insured from now on.

¹ E. C. Starks, A History of California Shore Whaling, Fish and Game Bulletin No. 6, October 1922, p. 14.

² Monterey Daily Cypress, Nov. 18, 1919.

³ Ibid., Nov. 28, 1919.

Knute Hovden said that fishermen employed by canneries and fresh fish dealers would be aided by their employers; it was the independent fishermen that needed help. The city wanted to help and appointed a committee of four to assist fishermen in whatever capacity it could.¹

In spite of strife and storm, 86,180,000 pounds of sardines were landed at Monterey and the canneries managed to produce a banner pack of 790,724 cases of one pound ovals and a considerable amount of smaller case goods.² The salmon catch for the year was approximately 2,800,000 pounds.³

The fresh fish industry was progressing nicely under city licensing; in mid-year, the wharf was nearly filled by twenty-two fresh fish concessions.⁴

¹ Monterey Daily Cypress, Dec. 21, 1919.

² Fish and Game Commission, 26th Biennial Report, 1918-1920, p. 131.

³ California Fish and Game Bulletin No. 49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 52.

⁴ Monterey Daily Cypress, June 30, 1919.

CHAPTER VII

SARDINE FISHING AND CANNING METHODS

FISHING METHODS

This survey would not be complete without the inclusion of an analysis of the sardine fishing methods which were in large part responsible for Monterey's fame as a sardine fishing and canning center.¹

Monterey Bay is crescent shaped, measures twenty-three miles from tip to tip. Its coastline is rocky with a rocky bottom dropping off to thirty fathoms a mile offshore.

Prior to 1919, lampara boats fished up and down this coastline in the open sea because of the poorly developed methods of locating fish.

The lampara sardine launch was developed from an earlier model known as the "Monterey type" and originally used in salmon trolling. Prior to 1918, the Monterey type salmon troller and the sardine boat were almost identical; the Monterey type was only a modified lateen sailboat used about 1902 for gillnetting; a power engine replaced sail and mast.

But from 1918-1925, the sardine launch grew away from

¹ This analysis was made possible through W. L. Scofield's excellent study: Sardine Fishing Methods at Monterey, California Fish and Game Bulletin No. 19, 1929, pp. 5-52 inclusive.

its parent; it became larger and installed a small house amidships with a shield for the helmsman. The sardine launch retained these parental traits however: a clipper bow, a long gunwale, and compromise stern. The mast was cut to six feet and attached to it was an electric light to aid in loading fish. Fish were not loaded into the hold however, for it contained only the engine room and propeller shaft.

A typical sardine launch in 1920 was 34 feet in length, had a 9-1/2 foot beam, and was 3-1/2 - 4 feet deep. It was powered by a one, two, or three cylinder engine generating 16 horsepower. Cost ranged from \$1800 - \$6000; \$4000 was average. The life span of a sardine launch was about ten years.

As the sardine launch had no hold capacity for fish, it was necessary to tow a barge or lighter. Lighters were not power equipped. They were from 25 - 35 feet in length, had a beam of 8 - 12 feet, and were 3-1/2 - 4-1/2 feet deep. Their load limits were from 12 - 30 tons.

Lighters were covered by five or seven removable hatches, square-sterned, either flat or round bottom, and equipped with hand pumps to remove water from the hull. Flat-bottomed lighters cost from \$500 - \$800; round-bottomed, from \$700 - \$1000.

Incidental equipment on the lighter consisted of mooring ropes of 3 - 4 inch diameter used to tie the lighter in

place while unloading at the cannery, and a small skiff used in loading the lighter with fish.

The net used in fishing operations was, of course, the lampara, which has been previously described (see pages 37 and 38). The chief factor in net size was the number of men required to operate it. An increase in size meant an increase in cost. Small nets were useless for large-scale cannery operations; but small lampara bait nets were used to supply the fresh fish market with sardines and squid. They were operated by four to seven men.

Large lampara nets were used during the war to supply the great demand for fish existing at that time; such a net cost \$1500 - \$2000. To be kept in repair nets were continually sewn, cleaned, tanned, and salted if piled in a wet condition.

The average lampara crew comprised eight men and a captain. The captain was owner of launch, lighter and equipment; he acted as a general manager and director of the work, although he did his share of the work, too. The captain entered into the contract with the canner and received payment for the catch. The money was divided into twelve shares, the captain receiving four, each crew member, one.

As the size of the net used depended chiefly on the number of men required to operate it, so did the number of crews in operation depend largely on cannery capacity. However, most cannerys hired more crews than necessary and

placed a limit on their catch. Crews varied and were changed; no definite size was constant.

For instance, in 1919, there were 45 lampara crews and 400 lampara fishermen in Monterey. During the 1919-1920 season, 28 crews were employed by the canneries.

Crews were predominantly Italian or Sicilian; Japanese formed the next largest group, and Spanish a very small percentage. Most of the crew members were citizens.

Fishing for sardines in Monterey was (and is) done at night; there were few exceptions to this rule. Best catches were made on the 16 - 20 nights during the dark of the moon period between the third and first quarters. The actual fishing time was between moonset and moonrise. Crews seldom fished Saturday night because cannery crews did not want to work on Sunday. Nor was any fishing done during the "moon period" (full moon).

The reason for fishing at night was (and is) due to the peculiar luminosity or phosphorescence radiated by a school of sardines in the water. In fishing parlance, it is known as "fire" or "lights".

Upon locating a school of sardines by their "fire", the launch engine was shut off; rarely was an anchor dropped, for the net and catch acted as a stabilizer.

A "wing" of the lampara net was attached to the lighter which was set adrift. The launch then slowly circled the school of sardines, paying out the net as it traveled.

Cork lines were dropped first, then the "sack" or bunt was tossed over all at once. The launch returned to the lighter, the "wings" were pulled together, and the net hauled in. The hauling of the mesh through the water often frightened the fish, and "scares", a line with a heavy weight on one end, were splashed in the water to force the fish into the fine meshed "sack". The net was hauled in by hand from the port side, the right "wing" from the bow, the left "wing" from the stern; a man in the center of the launch worked the scare. The cork and lead lines and webbing were hauled in even bunches; near the end of the haul, the remainder of the lead line was hauled in all at once to keep the fish from diving. The net became a scoop.

Launch and lighter were held apart by boat hooks and the searchlight was turned on while three men with dip nets (or brailers) scooped the fish from the net into the hatch of the lighter. A skiff was often put in the water next to the net, and the man in it expedited the loading of the lighter due to his proximity to the net.

(It should be born in mind that lampara fishermen also caught squid by these same fishing methods. Squid were sold to fresh fish dealers and dryers -- rarely to canneries.)

The time required for circling the school of sardines required 8 - 10 minutes; hauling in took 15 minutes or so; the time spent loading varied with the size of the catch.

Total time spent, including searching was highly variable. After the lighter had been loaded and the net piled on the deck, the launch returned to the cannery by whom it was employed.

Unloading at the cannery took place whenever the boat came in. The night watchman in the cannery telephoned the floor boss and winchman. The cannery spotlights were turned on. The cannery's fish cutters were summoned by a whistle; each cannery had a different signal.

The lighter was moored, with its heavy ropes, next to the bucket elevator, a device consisting of a cable with one end anchored on a hoisting platform, the other end anchored in the bay; it was equipped with a trolley and trapdoor buckets and powered by a winch.

The lighter was flooded with sea water in order to float the fish. The buckets on the hoist were filled with fish; dipnets were again used for this operation. When the total catch had been unloaded, water in the lighter was pumped out by hand, and the night's work completed.

Unloading at night was preferred, since the fish could be cut, brined, dried, and fried and allowed to cool for the next day's packing.

CANNING METHODS

Now that the discussion of typical sardine fishing methods in Monterey about 1920 is finished, it seems

entirely relevant to follow the course of the sardine through a typical cannery as it had developed by 1920 on Cannery Row.

The following information was obtained from an article by Harry R. Beard contained in California Fish and Game, Sardine Number, October, 1921, Volume 7, Number 4, pages 240-246 inclusive.

From the loading and weighing platform, the sardines were carried by water and gravity through a trough and into the cannery proper.

The first operation in preparing sardines for canning was in the scaler, a large rotating cylinder in which the scales were rubbed off and also washed away by a water spray.

The sardines were discharged on a cutting table. Although one canner was experimenting with a cutting machine in 1920 (Hovden) cutting was done by hand, usually by Japanese women. The sardine was held belly down on a cutting board, the head severed and entrails removed. The cut fish was dropped into a bucket; the worker, who was paid for the number of buckets filled, delivered the bucket to the checker who punched a hole in the card attached to the cutter's back. The sardine entrails were dropped through a hole in the cutting table; offal was taken to the reduction plant.

The cut fish were next placed in large wooden vats containing an almost saturated solution of salt in water; this

step was known as brining. Brining accomplished several things: water, blood and protein were extracted, while the salt entered the flesh of the fish, making it firmer. Sardines remained in brine from thirty to sixty minutes.

Brined fish were too moist to fry; consequently, the moisture was removed by hot air. This drying process was usually performed on an endless wire belt which ran through a narrow, hot air chamber. In some canneries, the wire belt was not used, the sardines being placed on trays and wheeled into the hot air chamber on trucks. The hot air was generated by large fans blowing air across steam heated coils. In most cases, an hour of drying was sufficient.

The sardine next appeared in trays at the fry-bath, where preliminary cooking was accomplished. The fry-bath consisted of a long metal vat containing steam coils. The trays of fish were placed in the vats which contained steam heated cottonseed oil (215-240 deg.F.) and slowly passed the length of the vat on an endless chain conveyor.

Frying brought out the natural delicacy of the fish which retained a portion of the oil. After a day of frying, waste and water were separated from the oil, the vat cleaned, the oil returned to it.

Eight minutes was adequate for frying with oil temperature at 230 deg. F.

The trays of fried fish were then placed on trucks and allowed to remain until cool.

A steaming process for sardines was also employed at this time in lieu of the oil frying. It differed from the oil fry in that sardines were packed in cans after brining without being dried. Preliminary cooking was accomplished by inverting the cans of fish and steaming them. The inverted position allowed oil and other extractives to drain out. After steaming, the same procedure as that employed with oil fried sardines was followed.

The next procedure was packing for the oil fried sardines; steamed sardines, already packed, were allowed to cool.

On the packing table, women packers discarded the broken fish and packed the others in clean cans. The cans were either supplied by a chute from the warehouse or trucked in by the case. Each woman had a card which was punched every time she received a case; like cutting this operation was paid for on a piece-work basis. The women placed the fish in the cans which were carried on a belt conveyor to the inspector who discarded the poorly packed cans. The remainder passed beneath a mechanical sauce distributor which added the correct amount of cold tomato sauce to each.

To make sure that no air spaces existed in the packed and sauced cans, an exhaust box was provided, through which the cans passed on a belt conveyor until their contents were thoroughly heated.

The heated cans were then carried on the belt conveyor to an automatic sealing machine which picked them up, and with a whirl, sealed the can. Max-Am and Gray sealing machines were employed for this purpose. These automatic machines could seal as many as forty cans per minute. The cans fell from the machine into a heavy metal truck which had a very large capacity.

Sterilization and further cooking of the can's contents were necessary to insure its keeping qualities. Therefore, the trucks containing the cans were wheeled into large steel retorts and locked in. Live steam under pressure was forced into the retort, and the cans were cooked at 240 degrees Fahrenheit for about two hours. After this retorting process, the cans were allowed to cool, then washed in soap and allowed to dry. After this, they were conducted into the storage room.

The storage period lasted about two weeks. After this time, the cans were inspected; any cans not tightly sealed or "swelled" were discarded. The rest were labeled and packed in cases for shipment.

There seems little point in discussing the reduction process here. It was still in the experimental stage, relatively speaking, and had not yet reached a place of prominence in the fishing industry. The rise of reduction really began in 1921.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that a logical point of termination in this survey has been reached because a certain unity has been attained.

It must now be clear that the rise and decline in a certain type of fishing effort has a positive correlation with the rise and decline of certain national groups.

(The Portuguese were prominent as whalers; the temporary cessation of whaling about 1900 destroyed their dominance at Monterey; there are reports in 1899 and 1901 of Japanese whalers as well as Portuguese. The revival of whaling in 1918 was not responsible for a Portuguese renaissance because it was no longer an art, but wholesale slaughter by the most destructive weapons.

The Chinese lost their prominence in squid and abalone fishing through prohibitory legislation and a fire, which dispersed the Chinese as a fishing colony.

The Chinese loss was the Japanese gain, for abalone diving became, after 1900, one of their most effective pursuits. Salmon trolling was another fishing field in which the Japanese proved their worth; after 1916, however, salmon began a slow but steady decline. Consequently, the Japanese turned to albacore trolling in Southern California waters.¹

¹ K. Hovden states that after 1916, a majority of the 225 Japanese salmon fishermen left Monterey to fish for albacore at San Pedro and vicinity.

The introduction of the lampara net in 1905 and the phenomenal growth in sardine fishing and canning brought the Italian, or Sicilians, to the fore in this type of fishing effort. Many Orientals found work in the canneries as cutters and packers as did many Occidentals. But the crews and captains of the lampara launches were, by and large, of Italian extraction.

Legislation and technical improvements have aided and restricted certain types of fishing, ~~as we have discovered.~~ Legislative control during the war was in large part responsible for creating dissatisfaction among fishermen and giving them pretext for strikes. The entrance of a controlling force into the fishing industry also stimulated unionization of different groups. But as to unity within the industry itself, one discovers that with its growing complexity and continued expansion, each group becomes more sharply defined, more aggressive, more competitive, more interested in its own welfare to the exclusion of others. Even during a period of plenty and high prices, the concept of interdependence was only gradually emerging.

The reasons for the rise and/or decline of a certain type of fishing effort should be clearly understood.

Whaling ceased about 1900 because of a shortage of whales and inefficient means of securing those whales which remained. During nearly two decades, the whale supply was gradually replenished; and by 1918, the improvements in

whaling techniques were such that this type of fishing effort could be efficiently and profitably resumed until a shortage of whales and/or the lack of profit in the business made it no longer feasible.

Salmon trolling declined in spite of legislation of a restrictive nature, because that legislation was eminently defective. The reasons for salmon depletion were (and are) these: 1) overfishing; 2) dams obstructing spawning grounds; 3) overflow basins; 4) predatory fishes; 5) pollution; 6) spearing salmon in spawning beds.¹

Both squid and abalone reached a prominent place among Monterey's fisheries; abalone was (and is) well protected. Abalone canning and the sale of it as fresh fish prospered, during the period we have covered at least. Eighty-eight percent of the California abalone catch has been made at Monterey since 1916.²

After the legislation of commercial squid fishing in 1913 that fishery has steadily risen to a place of considerable importance. Since 1916, 97% of the California total squid poundage has been landed at Monterey;³ the lampara net was a decisive factor in this remarkable tally, as it

¹ G. H. Clark, Sacramento-San Joaquin Salmon, Fish and Game Bulletin #17, 1929, p. 61.

² California Fish and Game Bulletin #49, Commercial Fish Catch, 1935, p. 108.

³ Ibid., p. 115.

was particularly suited to this small form of marine life.

As for sardines, their remarkable rise from bait fish to case goods and meal and oil has reduced other types of fishing to a place of secondary importance. In tonnage and in profits, in construction and employment, the sardine fishing by 1920, was supreme in Monterey's fishing industry.

There is a logical break in continuity after the year 1919; subsequent years brought a slump in the entire fishing industry and also a diversification in sardine fishing: i.e., reduction of edible fish into meal and oil. As this next period represents an entity in itself due to its technical and legal aspects, this survey is terminated with the year 1919.

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